

THE ATHENÆUM

Journal of English and Foreign Literature, Science, and the Fine Arts.

No. 184.

LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1831.

PRICE 8d.

REVIEWS

American Ornithology; or, the Natural History of the Birds of the United States. By Alexander Wilson and Charles Lucien Bonaparte. Edited by Robert Jameson, Esq. Vol. I. Edinburgh, Constable & Co.; London, Hurst, Chance & Co.

Wilson's 'American Ornithology' is so justly celebrated, that it needs no commendation from us; but nine quarto volumes, and three supplementary by Lucien Bonaparte, are out of the reach of ordinary book-purchasers; therefore this first English reprint, equally neat and cheap, cannot fail to be successful. The original edition, too, published in numbers, with subjects dependent in a great degree on accident, wants arrangement;—the revision of Professor Jameson, both of the original and supplement, and the scientific arrangement of the whole, give additional value to the present edition. Wilson's work is, however, a very delightful one, without any reference to science: there is throughout it all the freshness of nature; he was no book scholar; he did not acquire his learning in the schools, but sought for it himself, and with indefatigable bodily as well as mental exertion; and his volumes are enlivened with personal narrative, sketches, and incidents, that equally illustrate the subject, and the character of the man: they may be read as White's Selborne and Walton's Angler are read by those who care little for the professed subject on which the writer treats. The Memoir prefixed is exceedingly interesting, and so little is known of Wilson generally, that, considering the value of his contributions to natural science, and the interest all acquainted with his work must feel in the man, we think it well to give some general notice of him.

Alexander Wilson was originally a Paisley weaver. He never liked this sedentary employment, and in his twentieth year he joined his brother-in-law, and travelled over the eastern districts of Scotland as a pedlar. His education was very limited; yet he seems always to have had a taste for literature, and some ambitious hopes that he might hereafter distinguish himself. He very early figured as a writer of verses in the local papers; and in 1789 ventured to publish a volume. We are not acquainted with his poems, but there is little imagination in any of the specimens here given: his 'Watty and Meg' was popular, but we believe it was the only one that ever took great hold of the feelings of his countrymen. With his pack and his poems he now started again, but neither in the sale of poetry, pictures, silks, or muslin, was he very successful. In a journal kept at the time, he records that the proceeds of a whole day's labour, after penetrating the recesses of some two hundred

miserable habitations, was but two shillings! and he returned disappointed to his old trade. Though subject all his life, like most men of imagination, to fits of despondency, he was not one likely to sit down depressed and desponding; always of an adventurous disposition, he was willing, if opportunity of change offered, to trust to his own power and resources. He still continued to cultivate his mind; but some satires and personalities got him into difficulties and the law courts; and, catching the spirit of the age, he associated himself with the reformers of his day, and soon felt the influence of that power which then oppressed them; he therefore determined on emigrating to America. To accomplish this he laboured diligently and lived hard; for four months he did not allow himself more than *one shilling a week*; and thus having collected a sufficient sum to defray the expenses of his voyage, he took leave of his friends, set out on foot for Port Patrick, and embarked for America.

A more friendless man never set his foot on those shores; without acquaintance, without letters of introduction, with only a few shillings in his pocket, and no certain or known resources, his indomitable spirit was unshaken; and full of rejoicing, in having reached his land of promise and of freedom, he set out with his fowling-piece in his hand to walk from Newcastle, where he landed, to Philadelphia; and it is not unworthy of remark, says his biographer, "that his first act was shooting a bird of the red-headed woodpecker species, as if then already beginning his career as the American Ornithologist."

We need hardly say that a man so friendless had many difficulties to contend against; he worked as a weaver—he journeyed as a pedlar—but eventually turned schoolmaster, and remained many years teaching others and improving himself, in a small village in Pennsylvania; and it may be mentioned as proof of his most affectionate disposition, that at this time he journeyed eight hundred miles on foot, in the hope that his experience might enable him to assist in the settlement of a part of his family, lately arrived from Scotland. In 1802 Wilson entered into an engagement with the trustees of a school in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, which not only associated him with informed and intelligent men, but first enabled him to develop that love of science, and to cultivate that particular study, for which he afterwards became so celebrated. The following delightful letter was written about this time to his nephew, then residing on a farm in the state of New York:—

"My dear friend and nephew, I wish you could find a leisure hour in the evening to give the children, particularly Mary, some instruction in reading, and Alexander in writing and accounts. Don't be discouraged though they make but slow progress in both, but persevere a little

every evening. I think you can hardly employ an hour at night to better purpose. And make James read every convenient opportunity. If I live to come up beside you, I shall take that burden off your shoulders. Be the constant friend and counsellor of your little colony, to assist them in their difficulties, encourage them in their despondencies, to make them as happy as circumstances will enable you. A mother, brothers, and sisters, in a foreign country, looking up to you as their best friend and supporter, places you in a dignified point of view. The future remembrance of your kind duty to them now, will, in the hour of your own distress, be as a healing angel of peace to your mind. Do every thing possible to make your house comfortable: fortify the garrison in every point; stop every crevice that may let in that chilling devil, the roaring, blustering northwest; heap up fires big enough for an Indian war-feast; keep the flour-barrel full; bake loaves like Hamlet's Head; make the loom thunder, and the pot boil, and your snug little cabin re-echo nothing but sounds of domestic felicity. I will write you the moment I hear of George. I shall do everything I have said to you, and never lose sight of the 18th of March; for which purpose I shall keep night school this winter, and retain every farthing but what necessity requires—depend upon me. These are the outlines of my plan. If health stand it, all will be well; if not, we cannot help it.

"I succeed tolerably well, and seem to gain in the esteem of the people about. I am glad of it, because I hope it will put it in my power to clear the road a little before you, and banish despondence from the heart of my dearest friend. Be assured that I will ever as cheerfully contribute to your relief in difficulties, as I will rejoice with you in prosperity. But we have nothing to fear. One hundred bushels of wheat, to be sure, is no great marketing; but has it not been expended in the support of a mother, and infant brothers and sisters, thrown upon your bounty in a foreign country? Robert Burns, when the mice nibbled away his corn, said,

I'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
And never miss't.

Where he expected one, you may a thousand. Robin, by his own confession, ploughed up his mice out of 'ha' and hame.' You have built for your little wanderers a 'cozie bield,' where none dare molest them. There is more true greatness in the affectionate exertions which you have made for their subsistence and support, than the bloody catalogue of heroes can boast of. Your own heart will speak peace and satisfaction to you, to the last moment of your life, for every anxiety you have felt on their account." p. xxxiv—vi.

It was now that, having determined on forming a collection of all the birds in that part of America, he first set about it with his accustomed zeal:—

"While others are hoarding up [he says, in a letter to a friend,] their bags of money, without the power of enjoying it, I am collecting, without injuring my conscience, or wounding my peace of mind, those beautiful specimens of

"† The name of a rock near Paisley."

nature's works that are for ever pleasing. I have had live crows, hawks, and owls; opossums, squirrels, snakes, lizards, &c., so that my room has sometimes reminded me of Noah's ark; but Noah had a wife in one corner of it, and, in this particular, our parallel does not altogether tally. I receive every subject of natural history that is brought to me; and, though they do not march into my ark from all quarters, as they did into that of our great ancestor, yet I find means, by the distribution of a few fivepenny *bills*, to make them find the way fast enough. A boy, not long ago, brought me a large basketful of crows. I expect his next load will be bull-frogs, if I don't soon issue orders to the contrary. One of my boys caught a mouse in school, a few days ago, and directly marched up to me with his prisoner. I set about drawing it that same evening; and all the while the pantings of its little heart showed it to be in the most extreme agonies of fear. I had intended to kill it, in order to fix it in the claws of a stuffed owl; but happening to spill a few drops of water near where it was tied, it lapped it up with such eagerness, and looked in my face with such an eye of supplicating terror, as perfectly overcame me. I immediately untied it, and restored it to life and liberty. The agonies of a prisoner at the stake, while the fire and instruments of torment are preparing, could not be more severe than the sufferings of that poor mouse; and, insignificant as the object was, I felt at that moment the sweet sensations that mercy leaves on the mind when she triumphs over cruelty."

He now devoted the whole of his time and attention to ornithology. In 1806 the American government having determined to dispatch some scientific men to Louisiana, Wilson applied for, but did not succeed in getting, an appointment. He, however, soon found all the patronage he desired in a bookseller: it was agreed between them to publish his work; and the first volume made its appearance in 1808. In a letter sent with a copy to his father, he observes—

"In giving existence to this work, I have expended all I have been saving since my arrival in America. I have also visited every town within 150 miles of the Atlantic coast, from the river St. Lawrence to St. Augustine in Florida."

He now set out, as before in Scotland with his poems, to travel over the States and procure subscribers, and further to establish a correspondence everywhere, so that, as he said emphatically, scarcely a wren or a tit should pass between York and Canada, but he would have intelligence of it. His success in the sale of his work was not great, judging from the following scattered notices:—

"Visited a number of the literati and wealthy of Cincinnati, who all told me, that they would think of it, viz. of subscribing: they are a very thoughtful people."

"In Annapolis I passed my book through both houses of the legislature: the wise men of Maryland stared and gaped from bench to bench; but having never heard of such a thing as one hundred and twenty dollars for a book, the *ayes* for subscribing were none; and so it was unanimously determined in the negative."

"Having a letter from Dr. Muhlenberg to a clergyman in Hanover, I passed on through a well-cultivated country, chiefly inhabited by Germans, to that place, where a certain judge took upon himself to say, that such a book as mine ought not to be encouraged, as it was not within the reach of the commonalty, and therefore inconsistent with our republican institutions!"

"I expect to be in Albany in five days; and, if the legislature be sitting, I shall be detained perhaps three days there. In eight days more

I hope to be in Philadelphia. I have laboured with the zeal of a knight errant, in exhibiting this book of mine, wherever I went, travelling with it, like a beggar with his bantling, from town to town, and from one country to another. I have been loaded with praises, with compliments, and kindnesses,—shaken almost to pieces in stage coaches; I have wandered among strangers, hearing the same Oh's and Ah's, and telling the same story, a thousand times over; and for what? Ay, that's it! You are very anxious to know, and you shall know the whole when I reach Philadelphia."

The second volume of his work was published in January 1810, and Wilson immediately set out again on his travels, determined to proceed down the Ohio from Pittsburgh to New Orleans; and notwithstanding many sensible objections were urged, and difficulties foreseen, this persevering enthusiast resolved on venturing alone in an open skiff, as most favourable to his researches, and best suited to his very limited means. With a few biscuits, some cheese, a bottle of cordial presented to him, a small tin to bail the boat and serve as a drinking cup, his gun, trunk, and great coat, he pushed off into the stream. He thus wrote to a friend:—

"In this lonesome manner, with full leisure for observation and reflection, exposed to hardships all day, and hard berths all night, to storms of rain, hail, and snow—for it froze severely almost every night—I persevered, from the 24th of February to Sunday evening, March 17, when I moored my skiff safely in Bear Grass Creek, at the rapids of the Ohio, after a voyage of seven hundred and twenty miles."

From Louisville he appears to have travelled on foot, and the extracts from his journal are sufficiently interesting. Wilson could bear hardships as well as most men, and as cheerfully; but he met with still harder people than himself, to whom even an indoor bed was a debilitating luxury. Speaking of the boatmen of Natches, he says—

"These people came from the various tributary streams of the Ohio, hired at forty or fifty dollars a trip, to return back on their own expenses. Some had upwards of eight hundred miles to travel. When they come to a stream that is unfordable, they coast it for a fallen tree; if that cannot be had, they enter with their budget on their head, and, when they lose bottom, drop it on their shoulders, and take to swimming. They have sometimes fourteen or fifteen of such streams to pass in a day, and morasses of several miles in length, that I have never seen equalled in any country. I lodged this night at one Dobbin's, where ten or twelve of these men lay on the floor. As they scrambled up in the morning, they very generally complained of being unwell, for which they gave an odd reason—lying within doors, it being the first of fifteen nights they had been so indulged."

Shortly after his return he wrote thus to his brother:—

"By the first opportunity I will transmit a trifle to our old father, whose existence, so far from being forgotten, is as dear to me as my own. But, David, an ambition of being distinguished in the literary world has required sacrifices and exertions from me with which you are unacquainted; and a wish to reach the glorious rock of independence, that I might from thence assist my relatives, who are struggling with, and buffeting the billows of adversity, has engaged me in an undertaking more laborious and extensive than you are aware of, and has occupied almost every moment of my time for several years. Since February 1810, I have slept, for several weeks, in the wilderness alone,

in an Indian country, with my gun and my pistols in my bosom; and have found myself so reduced by sickness, as to be scarcely able to stand, when not within 300 miles of a white settlement, and under the burning latitude of 26 degrees. I have, by resolution, surmounted all these, and other obstacles, in my way to my object, and now begin to see the blue sky of independence open around me."

The publication of his work proceeded regularly; he made other excursions, equally in search of birds and subscribers; but his health seems to have been impaired by his indefatigable exertions; and while the eighth volume was passing through the press, he was seized with dysentery, and died on the 23rd August 1813.

His Ornithology is the best evidence of his ardour, perseverance, and ability. It is, indeed, an extraordinary work, to have been accomplished under so many disadvantageous circumstances in so short a time. Of Wilson personally, his American biographer thus writes:—

"He was possessed of the nicest sense of honour. In all his dealings, he was not only scrupulously just, but highly generous. His veneration for truth was exemplary. His disposition was social and affectionate. His benevolence was extensive. He was remarkably temperate in eating and drinking: his love of retirement preserving him from the contaminating influence of the convivial circle. But, as no one is perfect, Mr. Wilson partook, in a small degree, of the weakness of humanity. He was of the *genus irritabile*, and was obstinate in opinion. It ever gave him pleasure to acknowledge error, when the conviction resulted from his own judgment alone; but he could not endure to be told of his mistakes. Hence his associates had to be sparing of their criticisms, through a fear of forfeiting his friendship. With almost all his friends, he had occasionally, arising from a collision of opinion, some slight misunderstanding, which was soon passed over, leaving no disagreeable impression. But an act of disrespect, or wilful injury, he would seldom forgive."

We have thought this brief sketch of the singular life of the American ornithologist might be acceptable to our readers; but we cannot conclude without the strongest recommendation of this very neat and cheap edition of his delightful work.

Dignities, Feudal and Parliamentary, and the Constitutional Legislature of the United Kingdom; the Nature and Functions of the Aula Regis, the Magna Concilia, and the Communia Concilia of England; the History of the Parliaments of France, England, Scotland, and Ireland, &c. By Sir William Betham. 2 vols. 8vo. Vol. I. London, Boone.

WE cannot introduce this volume to the attention of our readers better, than by presenting them with some of the introductory observations, and thus making the author speak for himself:—

"On common topics men argue rationally and logically, and proceed to their investigation according to rule; but their free and glorious constitution is to Englishmen so much an object of veneration, and almost idolatry, that they cannot be satisfied to seek its origin amongst sources similar to those from which have sprung the institutions of other nations, but must search for it in the clouds and mists of antiquity, and in the camps of their barbarous northern ancestors, and, indeed, any where but in its true locality,

and, therefore, have been led into a labyrinth of contradictions and anomalies.

"Writers on the history and constitution of England have fondly clung to the idea that from, and even before, the Norman conquest, there existed something like a popular, constitutional, and free government, and a representation of the people, which they imagined to have exercised the functions of legislation during the period of Saxon jurisdiction, continued, but in a modified and altered shape, in the reigns of the first eight kings of the Norman race. Even the Lords' Committees were not free from the influence of this national, this patriotic infirmity, for they repeatedly admit, they can discover no evidence of a popular constitutional legislation, yet speak of the constituent parts of the legislative assemblies of those times."

"Early in the investigation, I found that many individuals were denominated *barons*, who never could have obtained that title by sitting in parliament, and *earls palatine*, who did not bear, as titles, the names of the counties of which they were earls; these titles could have no necessary connection with sitting in parliament, and, therefore, *earls* and *barons* were not, as such, *peers or lords of parliament*. This led to a conclusion, that the ancient assemblies of barons were different in their constitution and objects, to those we now call parliaments, and opened an extensive field for investigation. p. 1—3.

In prosecution of his design Sir William Betham proceeds to take a brief review of the feudal institutions of the French, Normans, and Anglo-Saxons, (for he proves, however strange it may appear to the reader of our popular English histories, that under the Anglo-Saxon kings, "a modification of the feudal law, certainly existed," following in this view the opinions of our profoundest writers on the subject). He next proceeds to consider "the institutions introduced by the Conqueror, and continued by his seven immediate successors, with a brief review of the councils, assemblies, and legislative events, of the succeeding reigns," and also an account of the introduction of the English law into Ireland, and of the parliaments of that country, and those also of Scotland. These inquiries, in the present volume, are brought down to the reign of Richard III., and by the prefixed advertisement, we learn that the second volume will continue the history of the Irish parliaments down to the period of the Union, and will also contain other inquiries, principally relating to Ireland.

The greater part of the present volume is occupied by attempts to ascertain the nature and character of the different councils, held by our Anglo-Norman monarchs, and to determine how far they might be considered as the models of our present parliaments; and, in the course of the inquiry, much interesting information is brought forward. It is Sir W. Betham's opinion, that the parliaments so called, previously to the reign of Henry III., were similar only in name to our present legislative assemblies—that they consisted of an uncertain number of nobles and ecclesiastics, summoned by the mere pleasure of the King to consult with him on state affairs, and then, after having concluded the business for which they were summoned, they were unceremoniously dismissed.

The following extract gives Sir W. Betham's opinion of the "Great Charter":—

"The struggle between John and his barons arose from the violation of their rights, which

had been granted by the previous charters of his predecessors. Few, if any, new liberties were then acquired; and it is a mistake to suppose, that any important change took place on this occasion in the constitution of the government of England, which had been limited in principle, but absolute in practice, but it was limited only so far as had been conceded by charter. John's charter reduced to practice the limited principle of the government which had been disregarded." p. 65-6.

This view is widely different from that of Hallam, who says, that the establishment of our great charter of liberties, was "beyond comparison the most important event in our history, except that revolution, without which its benefits would rapidly have been annihilated. The constitution of England has indeed no single date from which its duration is to be reckoned—the changes which time has wrought during the six hundred years subsequent to the Great Charter, have undoubtedly lessened its direct application to our present circumstances. But still it is the key-stone of English liberty. All that has since been obtained, is little more than confirmation and commentary; and if every subsequent law were to be swept away, there would still remain the bold features that distinguish a free from a despotic monarchy." This last opinion seems strongly supported by subsequent events; for during the long and unsettled reign of Henry III. we find nobles and citizens, ecclesiastics, and yeomen, standing forward in defence of their "chartered rights"—not contesting for they knew not what—not stipulating for a certain degree of superadded freedom, but taking their stand on this very charter, and making the chief if not sole ground of their charges against that worthless monarch, his unwillingness to observe its provisions.

We regret to find Sir W. Betham, in his careful and learned review of the events of this and the following reigns, frequently quoting the authority of Wikes, a chronicler whose statements are at variance with most of the contemporary chronicles, and who is chiefly remarkable for his rancorous hatred toward the memory of the Earl of Leicester, and for his extravagant notions of the "right divine of Kings"—notions which, however fashionable they might be at the courts of the Tudors, or the Stuarts, were certainly almost unknown in the days of our nobler Plantagenets. With a certain class of writers, such as Carte and Brady, we are well aware, that Wikes is a great favourite; and to those who stand aghast at the almost radicalism of the monk of St. Albans, the hyper-toryism of Wikes may be very comfortable;—but to an independent writer whose only object is truth, the partizanship of either chronicler ought to teach him to receive their statements with suitable caution.

As a more extended review of this learned and laborious work would be uninteresting to the general reader, and would be altogether useless to the more advanced student, whom we refer to the work itself, we shall conclude with the following extract, relating to the origin of parliament, which, at a period like the present, we doubt not will be read with interest:—

"Parliaments, as legislative assemblies, really had their legal origin in this king's reign; that is, they were first summoned and constituted by lawful authority. The assemblies held previously, were not, as before stated, legislative assemblies;

the *commune concilium* met for the only purpose of granting money, and the conventions of Leicester were illegal assemblies. Edward, to avoid the disasters of civil war, and anxious to reduce the power of the barons, which had inflicted such miseries on his father and grandfather, called to his aid the people, or what was afterwards emphatically denominated the commons, and essayed to form a constitution for his kingdom, on a firm and settled basis, adopting the model of the assembly summoned in the 49th of his father's reign. The storms of civil commotion did not allow him to settle it permanently. Their lordships observe, that 'no statute roll previous to his reign (Edward the First) has been preserved,' which supplies a strong inference, that no legislative parliament existed before that period. If the evidence which is extant did not of itself negative the existence of previous parliaments, the records, by showing that those assemblies were judicial, demonstrate that they were not parliaments, as that term is now understood."

"In the twenty-third of his reign, writes, for the first time, appear on the rolls in regular order: they were directed to archbishops, bishops, masters of orders, abbots, priors, and to earls, and other persons by name, but described in the record as *barons*, and to the sheriffs of counties for the election of knights, citizens, and burgesses, the sheriff being the returning officer for all the cities and boroughs in his bailiwick."

"Edward, in the new constitution, wisely preserved the ancient laws and customs of the nation, but modified them as far as was necessary to suit the altered circumstances of the times. 'The battle of Evesham had proved fatal to the Earl of Leicester and his party, and Henry had been restored to the free exercise of his royal authority; the edict of Kenilworth, and the statute of Marlbury, had produced, in a great degree, internal peace and orderly government."

"Though the provisions of Oxford had been annulled by the edict of Kenilworth, the memory of them still remained, and probably had a tendency to raise in the minds of the people opinions of their rights, and of the necessity of control on the royal power, to prevent those excesses which had provoked the past disturbances." 126—9.

The Bridal Night; the First Poet; and other Poems. By Dugald Moore. 1831. Glasgow, Blackie, Fullerton & Co.; London, Simpkin & Marshall.

THE first and longest of these poems ('The Bridal Night') reminds us extremely of Lord Byron's 'Corsair': the tale is of the same cast—savage, and of the sea; beautiful and deathly; loving and desperate. There is also in the poetry much of the same fervid and vigorous language—the same out-breaking of glowing imagery—and not a few of the same touches of musical melancholy. 'The First Poet' abounds in luxurious fancies; but, as blank verse, it is defective: it reads more like ten syllable metre, with the rhymes cut off. There is a somewhat similar poem in Laman Blanchard's 'Lyric Offerings,'—a little book that contains one or two perfect gems: he and Mr. Dugald Moore should get acquainted. The "other Poems" in Mr. Moore's book vary in length and merit, but none are without merit of some kind; the author will, however, do well to rein in mere fancy and feeling, and drink deep of Wordsworth, the poet of thought. He has so much poetical genius, that it is worth his while to labour patiently after "the accomplishment of verse," and not let his heroic measure break and fall so often, in imitation of the stanza that it has nothing to do with

—the Spenserian. The following is part of a very sweet passage, descriptive of the death and sea-burial of the pirate's bride :—

Stretch'd on a war-cloak Iaidora lay,
Her spirit passing like a dream away,
Gentle as summer zephyrs, when they die
Upon the bosom of a breezy sky;
A moment's hectic cross'd her bloodless cheek,
Like day's last sunbeams playing, or the peak
Of some far snowy mountain, though they skim
Along the ice, yet, ah! how cold and dim!
They cannot melt the frozen heap beneath,
But only beautify the frown of death;
So is that flush—'twas but a transient glare,
The twilight of the grave again is there;
So calm her last good-night, love seems to steal
The sting from death, that she may only feel
That sleep, which comes the broken heart to heal.

The sky is blue and beautiful—the breeze
Makes love upon the bosom of the seas;
But soon the gale will fan thy lifeless head—
The narrow house, fair sleeper! is thy bed—
The sun to-morrow will illumine the wave—
The sun will rise and glitter on thy grave!
The lonely stars, that were on many a night
Companions of thy wanderings, will light
Again thy torches at the summer noon—
But will they grant thee life's frail feverish boon?
The long night cometh, but it comes to thee
Dark with the shadows of eternity!
She breathes adieu—and setting in the grave,
Dim as the misty moonlight on the wave,
The spirit wanes within her glazing eye—
And, ah! what scenes—what thoughts of days gone by—
What vanish'd visions of long-vanish'd years
Speak in those glassy orbs that set in tears!
But oh! the night of death is lone and chill,
And she is nothing—whom he worships still!

Publii Terentii Afri Comœdia, ex editione Westerhovii. Amsterdam, 1830.

THE history of the Roman drama remains still a void in the annals of literature, and the materials from whence it must be derived are so scanty and scattered, that it is barely possible to supply the deficiency. The original Latin writers, those who drew on their own resources and scorned to imitate foreigners, are irrecoverably lost; of the greater part "*etiam perire ruina*," and the fragments of the few that survive in chance quotations can no more give us any idea of their merits than a hand of the Belvidere Apollo could enable us to judge of the exquisite proportions of that statue. Still, from these remnants of dramas, and from the incidental notices of critics and historians, it may be gathered, that the stage was the principal means of effecting that great literary revolution by which the native literature of Latium was destroyed, and all its authors compelled to follow Grecian models; from the same sources also may be learned the reluctance of the people to resign their own national entertainments for the more refined and intellectual exhibitions which the Patricians had imported.

In the earlier ages of Roman history two species of mimetic sports were practised, though not by professional actors: the first was a kind of pantomime derived from Etruria; the second a burlesque recitation, for the most part extempore, which originated with the Oscans. It is now acknowledged by most writers that the Patricians and Plebeians were really two different nations; the former derived from the Tuscan states, the latter being the original inhabitants of Latium. To this Niebuhr has added a more important distinction—he has shown that the Tuscans were also a compound people, formed from the Etrurians and Tyrrhenian Pelasgi, and in the first edition of his work hinted a belief that the Patricians were derived from the latter—an opinion which we shall soon see that the history of Roman literature confirms. The pantomimic sports of the Etrurians are

very imperfectly described by ancient writers, but the numerous representations of them on the Tuscan vases abundantly support the theory of Schlegel, that they resembled the modern entertainments of Harlequin and Punchinello, and were probably the prototypes of these amusements. The theory indeed has been unmercifully ridiculed by many, who deem that the ancients had a monopoly of wisdom, and that folly is of modern growth; but the respectable antiquity of Harlequin's origin is full as certain as that of half the royal families of Europe, and Punchinello's genealogy far more satisfactorily established than that of all the legitimates in Christendom. The Oscan sports gave rise to the *Fabellæ Atellanæ*, a species of farces which were the rude outlines of a regular drama; they were written in the Oscan dialect, which was long used by the lower ranks in Rome, like Saxon in England after the Norman conquest. There are still some specimens of the Oscan preserved, and in them we decidedly trace that element of the Latin language which is not Æolic Greek; but as the Latin historians were too aristocratic to notice anything respecting the Plebeians which they could possibly avoid, we have no means of discovering when that dialect ceased to be spoken, though we know from a host of authorities that it continued to be understood even in the age of the first emperors. Livius Andronicus is frequently called the Thespis of the Roman stage, with much more justice than those who give him the title suppose, since neither he nor Thespis were the inventors of dramatic entertainments, but only introduced improvements which laid the foundation of future excellence. From his name he appears to have been a Grecian, probably a native of the colonies in southern Italy or Sicily; he was brought to Rome a captive, and seems to have taken the prænomen Livius after his patron, as was the usual custom of freedmen. The merit or demerit of having first inspired a taste for Grecian models belongs to Livius; nor did he confine himself to the drama, he translated the *Odyssey* into Saturnian verse, and thus made the name of Homer known in Latium. The tragedians that followed Livius were for the most part mere translators, or, at best, imitators of the Athenians. Even Nævius, if we may judge from the title of his plays, followed the crowd, and in very few instances brought Roman subjects on the Roman stage. Schlegel expresses some anxiety to discover the means by which the Latin dramatists overcame the difficulties of the choral odes, for in that age their language was not so flexible nor so easily accommodated to the Grecian metres as it subsequently became; but it must be remembered that the Saturnian verse was susceptible of an immense variety of lyrical measures, and, from the fragments that remain, it is certain that in these parts of his dramas Nævius used the national metres. The tragedies ascribed to Seneca, which Schlegel deems fair examples of Roman adaptation, belong to a much later age—an age when the native measures were totally forgotten; for if in the time of Cicero they had become obsolete, they must have been wholly unknown in the age of Nero. The emasculate refinement of the Augustan age, and the pernicious influence of Horace, made the national melodies and metres unfashionable: and to be out of fashion is to be forgotten, in all ages of the world.

Of the Roman comedians two have come down to us tolerably perfect—Plautus, the prince of humour, and Terence, esteemed the first model of genteel comedy. Though not exactly contemporaries and rivals, it has been from a very early period a custom to compare these authors, and to determine which best merits Thalia's crown. Far be it from us to break through old customs; equally far be it from us to be guided by old decisions. During their lives Terence had certainly the most substantial proofs of eminence; he sat at the tables of the great; he was the intimate friend of Lælius and Africanus, while Plautus was forced to work as a slave for his daily bread. Horace, the literary pope of the Augustan age, assails Plautus in good set terms, but only insinuates the possibility of Terence being over-estimated. Finally, the critics by rule and square have found that Terence is a very correct writer, that he observes the statutes in such case made and provided; while Plautus is an outrageous offender against all laws, rules, and regulations, and says a good thing whenever he can, anything contained in the canons of criticism notwithstanding. We are, however, Protestants in our literary creed; we have thrown off the trammels by which the *soi-disant* followers of Aristotle have attempted to fetter our judgments, and are heretics enough to prefer the spirit and originality of Plautus, with all his wildness and excess, to the tame correctness of Terence. The Romans, we are informed, admired Terence chiefly for the artificial construction of his plots; he informs us himself, that his contemporaries blamed him for making his stories too complicated, and uniting several Greek comedies into one Latin. The praise and the censure seem equally misplaced: there is little ingenuity in the single incident, on which, slightly varied, the action of his six dramas depends; they all contain the same common story:—a disobedient son falls in love with a courtesan, or some one nearly approaching the character; his father persecutes him for such an attachment; the son, aided by an artful slave, plays several tricks on the old man, these are eventually discovered; but at the moment when ruin threatens the lovers, it is discovered that the fair lady is a citizen and an heiress, or some relation, and, of course, a happy marriage terminates the whole. There does not appear in these uniform plots any very striking circumstance to arrest public attention, and their popularity was farther diminished by the scene being invariably laid in Athens. The plays of Terence are absolutely Greek dramas in a Latin dress; every allusion refers to Athenian manners and customs, every incident was peculiar to the Attic metropolis; it could scarcely therefore be expected that comedies devoid of originality, nationality, and varied interest, could please a people so little devoted to refinement as the great bulk of the Roman citizens. Accordingly, Terence himself tells us, that one of his plays was interrupted by the anxiety of the spectators to witness the feats of a celebrated rope-dancer; and Horace declares, that applause was more frequently bestowed on the splendid costume of an actor than on the merits either of the piece or the performance. The Patricians, educated in a foreign literature and taught to despise their own as vulgar, erected a false standard of taste, as has happened in many other countries before and since; they wished for the

cold stateliness of what they designated classical dramas; and, provided the metres were correct, and the speeches examples of chaste declamation, they cared little for the life and spirit which really constitutes the soul of the drama. They acted on the same principles as a worthy critic of our acquaintance, who prefers the worst cast from the antique to the lively group of Tam O'Shanter, because the gallant Tam is not moulded in the proportions of the Apollo, nor does the landlady symmetrize with the ratios of form observed in the Medicean Venus. The populace, however, regarded not such rules; and but for the shows occasionally introduced, and the *exodia* which concluded the entertainments, they would probably have deserted the theatres altogether. Schlegel is of opinion that these *exodia* were invariably adaptations of that strangest of all literary productions—the Greek satyric drama; he has proved that in some instances they were so, but in the great majority of cases they were the old *Fabellæ Atellanæ*; the account given by Aulus Gellius, and the reference made to them by Juvenal, leaves no room for doubt on the subject. The favour of the people preserved these remnants of their own Oscan literature long after the Patricians had made Rome, at least in the higher circles, to all intents and purposes a Grecian city.

There were, indeed, a few writers who produced both tragedies and comedies founded on Roman subjects, but, with the exception of Afranius, they seem to have had but little encouragement, and his works are irrecoverably lost. So far then as the topics and subjects produced on the Roman stage are concerned, we find them to be such as claimed no share of the popular sympathy; and we cannot therefore be surprised at the little influence possessed by the drama in Rome, for no species of literature can hold even momentary power which does not share in the feelings, the affections, and even the passions and prejudices of the people.

We have confined ourselves to the matter of the Roman drama, and are far from having exhausted the subject; it will probably be resumed at some other opportunity, when we shall add some account of the form under which it was exhibited, the peculiar versification, the musical accompaniments, and the recitative declamation—topics that will at least possess the merit of novelty, if they derive interest from no other source. We shall also, for the special benefit of modern managers, detail the means by which the Roman exhibitors contrived to gratify the mob; for the Christmas pantomimes and Easter spectacles of late years exhibit such an absolute dearth of invention, that we fear the usual sources are dried up, and that the old fountains of Latium must be opened, to gratify the thirst for splendid exhibition, which characterizes this sight-hunting generation.

The Twelve Nights. London, 1831. Whitaker & Co.

This is one of those productions, in which the reader is more often reminded of faults, or annoyed by bad taste, than either pleased with the subjects to which his attention is requested, or beguiled onwards by the skill and ability of the writer. It consists of a series of those difficult things to write well and effectively, short stories; subdivided or

put together to make up the number of twelve—and hence the name. To call them stories or tales, however, is hardly correct; they are visions, anecdotes, and imitations of the German; and the majority are said to have already appeared in the principal periodicals. The author, who we understand to be Cornet Batier, formerly of 10th Hussar celebrity, is neither without fancy nor power; but sadly wanting in judgment.

The 'Remarkable Vision of Charles the 11th of Sweden,' is the only one of these twelve pieces that we remember to have seen before: and it is well conceived and well told. The 'Eve of Walpurgis' was certainly not worthy of a reprint, and is principally made up of a disagreeable dream, such as any coarse man might be afflicted with after a hearty supper of pork chops, or other indigestibles. The Spanish story of 'The Chest,' though in many parts extravagant like the rest, is clever; and the 'Tales of the Dead,' though far from original, are pleasantly told. We select one of the best things in the volume as a specimen. An Italian bandit, after having been hanged, is resuscitated, and, coming to Paris to try the trade of an honest man, the following lively account is given of his attempts in that way, commencing with a very just and sensible boast:—

"Love, they say, works miracles; and perhaps he will, in favour of Maria, operate my conversion. I have even already made considerable progress in the path of virtue; for I have procured myself two most essential requisites to the character of an honest man—a good coat, and a new hat."

"But besides that," added I, "you must have a trade; and I am greatly afraid, my good friend, that you have none."

"That is precisely what every one tells me," replied he; "and though I have tormented my poor brains about the matter from morning till night, I have never been able to perceive that a trade leads to anything good in France. Now, in Italy it is different: there the fields produce mushrooms sufficient to feed a city ten times as populous as that of Rome; in France everything must be paid for, even to the very mushrooms, which are rank poison."

"Do you think then," said I, "that the trade of lazaroni is that of an honest man?"

"Most undoubtedly. Your lazaroni is neither master nor servant; depends on no man's orders; works only when his necessities require; and his necessities are never very urgent, so long as the sun shines bright and warm. And then do you reckon for nothing the pleasure of seeing the Pope every day? a pleasure worth at least twenty indulgences every twenty-four hours. No life like the lazaroni's."

"In that case I am surprised you have neglected to procure your enrolment as a member of the fraternity."

"I had some thoughts of it," replied he, "and Maria would fain have persuaded me to it; but—I never liked the eruptions of Vesuvius."

"At the same instant we entered one of the barriers of Paris, and arrived suddenly before the Luxembourg, that beauteous and tranquil retreat formed expressly for the delight of quiet and peaceful souls. The Italian, astonished at everything, questioned me at every step. His wonder was in turn excited by the old apple-women that encumbered the porch of the palace, and by the young 'pillars of the state,' who came to legislate for the good of the nation. He was amazed that not a single vagabond could be found warming himself lazily and luxuriously in the sun; that most of the lazaroni, as he called them, in this country work like galley-slaves. His musical ear was shocked to hear

other lazaroni in the streets screaming their discordant notes to the accompaniment of a hurdy-gurdy; his eye was shocked with the sight of clumsy earthen pots, everything modern, nothing antique;—narrow streets; an infected atmosphere; young girls clad in the livery of wretchedness, and lacking the witchery of an Italian smile; venders of poison, cyceped apothecaries, in every street; and not a single Madonna. The bandit was struck with consternation. 'What can I do among such people?' said he, in a tone of anxiety that pierced through the natural hilarity of his disposition.

"In the first place, what are your qualifications?" asked I, beginning, I confess, to feel rather embarrassed with his company.

"Not many," replied he; "and yet I could play better music, I could paint better, I could guard a palace better, than the knaves I have hitherto seen: and as to the venders of poison with whom your streets are filled, here is a stiletto worth all their drugs;" and he sighed as he examined the point of his dazzling blade.

"If these are your only resources, Heaven help you, my good friend! The market is already overstocked with painters, poets, and musicians. As to your stiletto, if you will be ruled by me, you will let it repose quietly in the scabbard; otherwise you may chance to enjoy the swing-swing motion of which you are so fond, at a gallows where the rope never breaks."

"Yet, without boasting, I sing a love song admirably. At Venice, the amateur serenaders always confided the orchestra to me; and I generally managed matters so well, that it has more than once been my lot to finish on my own account an affair that I had begun on another's."

"Ah, my good friend, serenading does not go down here. In France there is but one way to a woman's heart;—gold here is a talisman that works more miracles than all the melody of Metastasio."

"In that case," replied the bandit with hauteur, "I shall enter the service of the king of France. His majesty shall see in what style I can handle a carbine, and manœuvre a battalion."

"In the first place, you must know that his most Christian Majesty is not so easily spoken with as an Italian captain of banditti. In the next, handle the carbine with what skill you may, you will find your matches here;—there are 200,000 brave fellows in France, who are paid for that work at the liberal rate of five sols per day."

"Ah!" cried the brigand, knitting his brows; "what a vile country! that cannot even support a band of brave fellows with a bandit-chief at their head! What an excellent cook they would find in me!"

"Cook!" replied I; "and pray what are your pretensions in that way?"

"Pardieu! I would have you know that we lads of the stiletto do not starve ourselves. I could serve you up a ragout such as any man of taste would pronounce exquisite. When I was at Terracina I was famous for a hare civet. If you could only ask Cardinal Fesch, Heaven preserve his Eminence! I recollect that one evening I was sent for to prepare his supper, and his Eminence swore by all the saints in the calendar, that even in his own palace he had never tasted anything more delicious."

"Hereupon I addressed the bandit in a solemn tone.—'I congratulate you,' said I,—'your destiny is in your own hands; your skill as a cook will ensure you a better welcome in France than you could expect had you the abilities of a field-marshal. Visit every house in Paris; and when you come to one that suits you, walk in boldly, announce your culinary talents, prove yourself a cook, and you are at the head of affairs directly.—Your fortune is

made; adieu!" I forthwith quitted him, relieved from all anxiety as to his future fate." 236—42.

The author is unfortunately troubled with wit, which first makes the reader grave and then melancholy; and this intrusive and abortive babble spoils the effect of some pieces, that might otherwise pass for tolerable.

State Papers published under the Authority of His Majesty's Commission. Vol. I. Parts I. & II. London, 1831. Murray.

[Third Notice.]

As the nature of the subject does not oblige us to follow strictly the order of dates, and as every page presents some rich memorial of the olden time, we shall in this our third notice indulge our own indolent humour, by culling notices at random, since it can be done without prejudice to the gratification of our readers.

The following from Wriothlesley to the Council, will show that the finances have been sore subjects of distress to Chancellors, even "in the old time before us;" "*Fuit ante Helenam*," &c.

"As concerning the preparacion of money, I shal do that is possible to be doon; but, my Lordes, I trust your wisdomes do conside, what is doon and paid already. You see the Kinges Majeste hath, this yere, and the last yere, spent 1300000*£*, or therabouts; and his subsidy and benevolence ministring skant three hundredre thousand therof; as I muse sumtyme, where the rest, being soo greete a summe, hath been gotten; soo the landes being consumed, the plate of the realme molten and coyned, wherof moche hath risen, I sorowe and lament the daunger of the tyme to com; wherin is also to be remembered the money that is to be repaid in Flaunders, and, that is asmoche and more then all the rest, the great scarcitie that we have of corne; being wheat, in al places in maner, Norfolk excepted, at 20*⁄* the quarter, and a marvelous smal quantitie to be gotten of it. And though the Kinges Majeste shuld have a greater graunt then the realme could beare at oon tyme, it wold do litle to the contynuance of these charges, which be soo importable, that I see not almost, howe it is possible to beare the charges this wynter, tyl more may be gotten; being the greate parte of the subsidy paid, the revenney received before hande, and more borrowed of the mynte, then wolbe repaid again this 4 or 5 monethes. Wherefore, good my Lordes, though you write to me styll, 'pay, pay; prepare for this, and for that,' consider it is your partes to remembre the state of thinges with me, and, by your wisdomes, to ponder what may be doon, and howe thinges may be contynued." 830-1.

As might be expected, abundant reference is made in these papers to the very radical reform that was then in progress as to our religious institutions. The order in which some passages relating to this subject follow, and are connected with others, is curious; they seem to stand in the direct relation of cause and effect, and in each case appear to reflect a mutual light on each other.

In page 619, is a long report from the Commissioners to Crumwell, of the enormous wealth and immense possessions belonging to the Abbey of Glastonbury—dated in September 1539. In October of the same year, the following communication passes between the same parties:—

"Pleasyth hyt Your good Lordshyp to be advertysed, that sythens the dyrection of oure laste letters unto your Lordshyp, we have come to knowlege of dyvers and sundrye treasons commytted and done by the Abbot of

Glastonbury: the certentye wherof shall appeyre unto your Lordshyp in a boke herein inclosed, and the accusers names putto the same, wch we thynke to be very haut and ranke treasons. And thus Jesu preserve your good Lordshyp. Frome Glastonbury, the seconde daye of Octobre.

"Yours to command,
" (Signed) RYCHARD POLLARD.
" (Signed) THOMAS MOYLE.
" (Signed) RIC: LAYTON."

Likewise in Henry's instructions to the Duke of Norfolk for his guidance in the north, there is a similar juxtaposition:—

"Sixte, We desire and praye you to have good respecte to the conservation of the landes and goodes of all suche, as shalbe now atteynted; that We may have them in sauftie, to be yeven, if We shalbe soo disposed, to suche persones, as have truly served Us; for We be enfourmed, that there were amonges them diverse freeholders and riche men, whose landes and goodes, well loked unto, wold rewarde other well, that with their truthe have deserved the same; not doubting, but you have already putte suche ordre for this poynte, as shal apperteyn.

"Finally, forasmoche as all these troubles have ensued by the sollicitacion and traitorous conspiracies of the monkes and chanons of those parties; We desire and pray you, at your repaire to Salleye, Hexam, Newminster, Leonerde Coste, Sainte Agathe, and all suche other places as have made any maner of resistance, or in any wise conspired, or kept their houses with any force, sithens thappointement at Dancaestre, you shall, without pitie or circumstance, now that our Baner is displayed, cause all the monkes and chanons, that be in any wise faultie, to be tyed uppe, without further delaye or ceremony, to the terrible exemple of others; wherin We thinke you shall doo unto Us high service."

The newly-stirred spirit of the times appears in a letter to Crumwell from Pollard, who had been commissioned to make inquest into the holy things, &c. of the shrine at Winchester:—

"Pleasith Your Lordship to be advertised, that this Saturdaye, in the mornyng, aboutes thre of the klok, we made an ende of the shryne here, at Wynchestre. There was in it no pece of gold, ne oon ring, or true stone, but al greate counterfaictes. * * * Which doon, we entende, both at Hide, and St Maryes, to swepe awaye all the roten bones, that be called reliques; which we may not omytt, lest it shuld be thought we cam more for the treasure, thenne for avoiding of thabomynation of ydolatri." p. 621-2.

Cranmer also thus writes to Crumwell:—
"Farther, bycause that I have in greate suspecte, that St Thomas of Canterbury his blode, in Christes Church in Canterburye, is but a fayned thing, and made of some redde okar, or of suche like matier, I beseech your Lordeskip that Doctour Lee, and Doctour Barbour, my Chapleyne, may have the Kinges commission to trye and examen that, and all other like thynges there." p. 580.

It was said long ago and has been often repeated, that the heart of an Englishman lies not in his bosom but in his belly; and truly, extracts might be given from these papers that would justify a suspicion that the reproach is not wholly without foundation.

The Council in London conclude a long letter to the King's Council, with a delicate hint, that—

"Being here at London, the place enforcith us so much the more to remembre the Mayres sute, for asmoche favour, at the Kinges Majestes handes, concerning venyson, as his predecessors have had, lest the want therof shuld be a token

abrode of the Kinges Majestes myscontentment with hym. The Mayors havor of late, at the cummyng of thAdmyral, hath been courageous, and to the Kinges Majestes honor, and in the lak herof, shuld be a gret discomforte." 855.

Lord Lisle (Admiral of the Fleet), in writing to the Lord Chamberlain, shows the importance our ancestors attached to their national beverage:—

"After my right hartie commendacions unto Your good Lordshipp. Theis shalbe tadvertisse the same, that wheras, in my last letters, I dyd signifie unto you the state of this armye, especially for drynck; and wheras I wrote unto you then, that inace the victuallers dyd not come unto us the soner, dyvers of this flete were like shortly to drynck water, I assure your Lordshipp, that sondry of the same had tasted it too dayes before the wrytynge of my said letters, which I dyd not then knowe. And sithens that tyme, I have been soo cauled uppon in tharmye, for want of the same, that I have been wery to here yt, and have been fayne to delyver beere oute of myne owne shipp, to releve some of them; and allwayes we have loked for the comyng of the victuallers oute of Rye unto us, which (if they had well considered the weight of such affayres) they wold have doon ere this tyme." p. 825.

And Lord Chancellor Wriothlesley to give force and solemnity to his protestation of innocence, on a sufficiently weighty occasion very naively declares:—

"I am, as summe think, to sore in it; but I serve Him, that I trust wold susteyn me, doing nothing but for his service; and God is my judge, I wold I, and all myn, were bounde to drynk water twies in a weke, whilles we lyved, upon condition that His Majeste might compasse all thinges to his hartes ease and contentacion."

We have reserved to the last, a letter from the same nobleman to his friend Lord Paget, relative to some exception that appears to have been taken to a passage in a former letter. We cannot conceive anything that better illustrates the true bearing of a gentleman, than this kind and earnest remonstrance which he addresses to his friend on the occasion of this misconstruction of him. It is in the full spirit of Shakspeare's Brutus, in his quarrel scene with Cassius:—

"Maister Secretary, afire my most hartly commendacions. If I did not conside, that you be contynuely occupied and troubled with greate and weighty affayres, which sumtyme soo disquiet and distempe the body, as a man laden with them, as you be, shal seme almost wery of himself, and soo sumtyme interprette all thinges somewhat frowardly, I wold complain of you to yourself, that canne soo overthwartly take thinges written by your freende, to his small power, as I perceyve you toke my letters, which yesterday I wrote unto you. But when I remembre, howe men in that place be sumtyme over layd with greate and weighty [affairs, which] in themselves have many tymes suche a deformytie and repugnance, that they engendre presently a melancoly humour in him, that bathe the mayning of them, and wolde fayne joyne them in a better concord and armony, then their disordre wold, in any wise, permytt and suffre, I must impute your hole letter to have passed, when you mynded somewhat elles, then the only remembrance of me, or of that whiche I wrote unto you; and I must leve you, and chide with that naughty humour, that could not expresse and shewe himself in other place, then in those letters to me. * * *

"In those letters I fynde mate uppon mate, blynde mates and seing mates, with suche diversitie of descant upon oon poore note, merely pricked, that if I referred not all to that I have

doon, I had nede take the helpe of good musicians for the true singing of it. In those letters I fynde jealousy spoken of; oon of the three synnes against the Holy Goste; with a feare of that, I have, nor never shal have cause to feare; with two matiers for oon; with staves endes, nippes, and twenty prety thinges, soo couched, that and if Maister Melancoly himself had not uttred them, or if they had not cumme to him, that is clerly purged and voyd of that humour, they might brede 100 bees in a mannes hed, and cause oon to think that, was never thought, [and to] write that, for neither parte were expedient.

"[But] to returne your oune termes to you again; I shalbe always towards you and yours of most frendly disposition, be you as jelous as you wolle, and descendant of my doinges, asmoche out of tune as you list; and this I write with al myn harte. And nowe let me knowe, whither I may sumtyme write a mery word, without suche tragedyes, or whither I must nedes work by lyne and level, thoughte you minstre the argument. And yet suerly, when I write to youe, me think I write even to meself; and that maketh me sumtyme to forget meself; if you wolle so take it, when I write frankly and freendly, and call it stomake, which is as faynt in me, as in any man. I wolle contynue this brawle no lengre. I wold my Lady sawe your letter, and whereupon it is grounded. I dare saye, thoughte my gentile nature cannot chide, she wold say sumwhat for me, whom you shall never fynde but a perfit freende; havinge a perfit and most assured trust, that I have the like of you, and shal soo fynde, in worde and dede, as I am, and ever wolbe to youe accordingly." p. 837-8.

The Cottager's Own Book. London, 1831. Seeley & Sons.

This '*Cottager's Own Book*,' is by no means the author's *own* book, unless by some strange accident the writer be one and the same with Mrs. Esther Copley, late Hewlett, author of '*Cottage Comforts*'; the seventh edition of which was published in 1830, by Simpkin & Marshall! Picking and stealing, abridging, vamping, and reviving, are not, it seems, confined to fashionable authorship, but have a place in the habits of those who cater for the poor, and economize (beginning, with honesty,) for cottagers. '*The Cottager's Own Book*' is a pamphlet of one hundred and eleven pages, and, with the exception of a preface, "containing extracts from A Peasant's Voice, by John Denson; A Day-Labourer, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire"; excepting, also, some pages relative to the Bee, and some quotations from Cobbett,—the whole is, word for word, taken from some part or other of Mrs. Copley's '*Cottage Comforts*.' To prove we are right in our assertion, we subjoin one extract from each; and we could subjoin parallelisms to a most Hebraic extent:—

"To make Elder Wine. But how can a cottager afford to make wine? I do not say that all cottagers can afford it, or that it is a necessary article of cottage housekeeping; but if the more thrifty sort, who like to have things about them as comfortable as possible, and who think of things at the right time, should be able to get themselves a two or three gallon keg, and fill it every year with elder wine, I see no harm in it. Most people, once in the year, generally about Christmas time, have a visit from their relations or neighbours; and I do not know a better thing to set before them at that cold season, than a mug of good warm elder wine. Nor is such a thing at all amiss used in moderation after a hard day's work—brewing, washing, or

the like—but mind, I do not recommend it when a person begins to feel the effects of having taken cold, in shivering, weariness, pains of the limbs, &c.—that will come to be spoken of by and bye. A gallon of elder wine costs very little more than a pint of gin, goes much farther, and is more wholesome and respectable. But then, elder wine must be thought of, and spared for, when elderberries are in season. Gin, unfortunately, is in season all the year round, and so it suits those who never think of a thing except just at the moment they want it, and who are least of all disposed to spare a few shillings in September, for their comfort in December and January. It can at any rate do no harm my setting down how elder wine is made. The country cottager will, of course, get his berries for gathering, and a few sloes, or perhaps he has a damson tree in his garden; a few of the shabbiest damsons, which he cannot offer for sale, will greatly improve his elder wine."—*The Cottager's Own Book*, p. 85-6.

"To make Elder Wine.—But how can a cottager afford to make wine? I don't say that all cottagers can afford it, or that it is a necessary article of cottage house-keeping; but if the more thrifty sort, who like to have things about them as comfortable as possible, and who think of things at the right time, should be able to get themselves a two or three gallon keg, and fill it every year with elder wine, I can see no harm in it. Most people, once in the year, generally about Christmas time, have a visit from their relations or neighbours; and I don't know a better thing to set before them at that cold season, than a mug of good warm elder wine. Nor is such a thing at all amiss, used in moderation, after a very hard day's work—brewing, washing, or the like—but mind, I don't recommend it when a person begins to feel the effects of having taken cold, in shivering, weariness, pain of the limbs, &c.—that will come to be spoken of by and bye. A gallon of elder wine costs very little more than a pint of gin, goes much farther, and is more wholesome and respectable. But then, elder wine must be thought of, and spared for, when elderberries are in season. Gin, unfortunately, is in season all the year round; and so it suits those who never think of a thing except just at the moment they want it, and who are least of all disposed to spare a few shillings in September, for their comfort in December and January. It can at any rate do no harm my setting down how elder wine is to be made. The country cottager will, of course, get his berries for gathering—and a few sloes—or perhaps he has a damson tree in his garden; a few of the shabbiest damsons, which he cannot offer for sale, will greatly improve his elder wine."—*Cottage Comforts*.

One thing may comfort the author of '*The Cottager's Own Book*,' we should not have praised it, even had it been his own: it is much too meagre to be of any essential service to the cottager. Mrs. Copley's work, on the contrary, is what it imports to be, a universal manual, descending to the minutest household particulars—taking the cottage with bare walls, and not stopping till it is furnished, peopled, and, if her closing chapter is attended to, peopled with "loyal, God-fearing people." Having 226 pages to turn herself in, and possessed of knowledge gained amongst the peasantry, and consequently available for their use, we earnestly recommend mistresses of families to make it their parting present to domestics about to establish themselves. It was submitted to us by the Lady Bountiful of a parish; and though neither domestics, nor yet about to establish ourselves, we read it through, and arose from the perusal with a much increased sympathy

for the little contrivances, little pleasures, and great privations of the poor; and with hearty respect for Mrs. Esther Copley, late Hewlett,—as witness our defence of her '*Cottage Comforts*,' from the moss-trooping author of '*The Cottager's Own Book*.'

The Sailor's Bride: a Tale of Home. By the Author of the '*Months of the Year*.' London, 1831. Tilt.

THIS is a simple story, composed of incidents that affect the feelings without outraging belief: it is

Familiar matter of to-day;
Some natural sorrow, loss, and pain,
That hath been, and may be again,

narrated in an artless and sometimes elegant manner. Without entitling their authors to take any very high rank as writers, we cannot but think that slight tales like the '*Sailor's Bride*,' made out of the vicissitudes that every day pass under our eyes, or narrated to us in our letters, and told to us by our fire-sides, are not only interesting, but positively beneficial. They tend to keep our sympathies from getting extortionate of horrors, and yet preserve them alive by showing how much of catastrophe there lies in common, very common life. It always rejoices us, too, to see the little, but heart-searing worldliness of "good sort of people," shown up in fiction, where, at least, poetical justice can be rendered them. The following train of thought, suggested by the selling up of a respectable but unfortunate household, has something of Sterne in it:—

"I entered the house, and made my way into the once quiet parlour of the now deceased inhabitant. 'Alas!' thought I, as I surveyed its dilapidated hangings, dusty walls, and disordered air, 'is it thus that the few necessary articles of life, collected perhaps with anxious care, and preserved with scrupulous economy, some indeed with sacred regard—is it thus, that the little all is dismembered, each separated from its fellow, and scattered among the strange multitude of the world?' The reflection was interesting, though sad, and I indulged the particular vein of thought which then obtruded itself. I assimilated this little scene of desolation with the more extensive, though to me not more impressive ruin—the downfall of a populous city; wherein the beauteous specimens of art, the ingenious devices of men, and the still more important remains of their forefathers, are deprived of their careful owners by some unexpected calamity, some 'pestilence that walketh at noon-day.' Here, thought I, are the ruins of one family—here, the wreck of many! Here are the testimonies of prudence, springing from that purest of affections, a love of home—there, the memorials of a people whose importance arose from their industrious cultivation of the soil—their commercial intercourse with the world—their due administration of justice—their love of country. Wherein, I asked, exists the difference, saving in extent?" p. 3-4.

The Tour of the Holy Land; in a Series of Conversations. By the Rev. R. Morehead, D.D. 1831. Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd; London, Simpkin & Marshall.

THERE is much information in this little volume, gleaned from various travellers, and condensed into the form of dialogues. The author's intention is to connect the more striking descriptions of Palestine with religious associations, and fix on the mind of youth "pious and useful impressions." There

is, as we have said, much information, and many valuable remarks in the book;—but the style and manner is unattractive—too much in the Theron-and-Aspasio vein, to win, we fear, much heed from heedless youth, who invariably dislike dialogue, and like narrative to travel post. Philo, Cleanthes, and Pamphilus discourse very good prose, but we fear the majority will call them prosy; however, their matter is good, and, for the size and price of the book, there is plenty of it. Part of the volume is from an anonymous journal, and the little notice of the writer in the preface, has in it something natural and affecting:—

"He left Bombay in the suite of a gentleman of the highest distinction and character, whom he describes as 'the most kind, pleasing, attentive, amusing fellow-traveller possible to be met with,' and accompanied him overland to Europe. Amongst other countries, in the course of their journey, they visited Palestine. The concluding sentences in that part of the journal which regards Palestine, have in them something very affecting when contrasted with the fatal event which soon followed. 'In our way from Nazareth,' he says, 'we observed numbers of beautiful blue lupins by the road-side, growing wild. In this neighbourhood, too, we saw several birds we find in England—such as linnets, chaffinches, and buntings; and, when returning from Mount Tabor the other evening, we were delighted with the song of the blackbird, and the sight of a robin red-breast, which recalled sensations and associations that had slept for eleven years. This being the day of the month on which I embarked from Gravesend, in 1817, through God's providence I hope to be spared to return to my native land, and see it and my friends once more.' He did return; but when he reached home, he was in the very last stage of a mortal disease,—merely saw and recognized those beloved friends, a meeting with whom was so near his heart, and felt thankful and happy to be restored to them for a few rapid moments,—he never heard the song of the blackbird, nor saw the red-breast again in his native land,—but expired in the course of the first week of his return." p. 8—10.

The Historical Traveller; comprising Transactions connected with the most curious epochs of European History. By Mrs. Charles Gore. 2 vols. London, 1831. Colburn & Bentley.

We have much respect for Mrs. Gore's talent, but must admit that the 'Historical Traveller' is not what it ought to have been, though in many parts a pleasant and readable book.

We have been rather perplexed as to what we ought to say of this work. The style is condensed and often vigorous, and the descriptions are sufficiently pleasant and graphic to fix localities in the memory of young people, for whose use it is designed—but then it is neither instructive history nor judicious romance, and flatters the mind with crude fractional parts of knowledge, with which the young are too apt to be satisfied, without after-study. We doubt too, and have very serious doubts, how far it is judicious to pamper the reading appetite of young people with scenes of cruelty and horror; they may awaken the attention of the idle and the reluctant, but sympathy is, we fear, too weak in us to be early familiarised with such scenes with impunity.

On the whole, we think the work better designed to refresh the memory of the old,

than to inform the minds of the young; and the old will not like it the less, if they are neither very well informed nor very critical.

A Greek-English School Lexicon. By the Rev. Thomas Dex Hincks, M.R.I.A. London, Whittaker & Co.

A Greek and English Lexicon. Also an English and Greek Lexicon. By George Dunbar, A.M., and E. H. Barker, Esq. Edinburgh, 1831. MacLachlan & Stewart.

THE Geography, History, Prosody, &c. of Dr. Hincks are well-known and useful works, and this, his latest, promises to be equally so. It is professedly elementary, and contains only such Greek words as occur in books used at schools, or met with in the necessary reading of a collegiate education.

The Lexicon of Messrs. Dunbar and Barker is much more extensive and valuable. It is founded on the well-known American work, but greatly enlarged and improved, with the addition of references to, and quotations from, the Greek Classics,—the only means that now remains to us of ascertaining the exact meaning of many words. Additional value has, in our opinion, been given to it by an Appendix of many technical and scientific words; and had the Latin explanations of these been translated, which, though difficult, was not impracticable, it would, in our judgment, have been still more generally useful. On the whole, we consider this a very valuable work.

EDINBURGH CABINET LIBRARY.—VOL. III.

View of Ancient and Modern Egypt, with an outline of its Natural History. By the Rev. Michael Russell, LL.D. 1831. Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd; London, Simpkin & Marshall.

ALTHOUGH we have not room to review this volume, we cannot defer announcing the publication. This is the third of the 'Edinburgh Cabinet Library,' a work so excellent in matter, so elegant in its typography, and so cheap, that we again recommend it in the strongest manner to our readers.

ROSCOE'S NOVELIST'S LIBRARY.

Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe; with a Biographical Sketch of De Foe, and Illustrations from original designs. London, 1831. Cochran & Pickersgill.

THIS first volume has just come to hand, but we have only time to announce the publication. It is very handsomely got up, with nine illustrative etchings. We understand, the publishers have entered into engagements with George Cruikshank; and 'Humphrey Clinker,' the next work in the series, will be illustrated by him. If we find anything of novelty in the memoir prefixed, we shall report on it hereafter.

Family Library of French Classics—Theatre. Paris and London, 1831. Treuttel & Wurtz.

THE third and fourth volumes of this very cheap publication have arrived: they contain thirteen of the dramatic works of Molière.

THE MAGAZINES.

BEFORE we say one word of either the *Englischman* or the *Metropolitan*, we must make our best bow to FRASER, and acknowledge the deep sense we entertain of the liberal and generous mention of us in their last number: it was right cordial and hearty—and deserves, and has, our best thanks. A bandying of compliments would be unworthy of both; we shall therefore restrict ourselves, on this occasion, to the honest avowal, that out of a hundred commendations, not one has given us more satisfaction. It is now

pretty generally known that, right or wrong, their opinions are honest; and, judging by our own feeling, their good word is valued as gold.

Now for the novelists, for to them our limits restrict us; indeed, when a periodical is once established and can fairly go alone, it is only on great occasions that we refer to it.

THE METROPOLITAN.

We reported pretty fully of the *Metropolitan* in an anticipatory notice; however, the paper by Mr. Campbell, on the 'Geography of the Ancients,' deserves even a higher commendation than, from merely having heard it read, we ventured to give to it. The notice of Herodotus, which we referred to in our last, we think it well to extract, in justification of our judgment.

"As a writer, he is pre-eminent for clearness and suavity—for benignant moral feeling, and for wielding with graceful ease vast historical materials. Veracious as to all that he saw, he is credulous as to what he heard, only from an honest excess of faith in human testimony. The pleasure which we receive from Herodotus, unless I am deceived by accidental associations, amounts to poetical enjoyment. How can this be, it may be asked, when there is neither figure nor colour of fancy in his limpid diction, nor impassioned eloquence in his placid morality? No; but his topographic description has a romantic expanse of scenery, opening vistas to the imagination, from the Steppes of Scythia to the gates of Babylon and the pyramids of Egypt. The mind is carried over his historic horizon of almost all the world unfatigued and unperplexed; and, when he crowns his narrative by bringing all the nations he has described into contact with invaded Greece, he gives history an interest resembling epic grandeur. The genius of prose literature appears in his writings as if she had gone abroad indeed over the world in quest of truth, but yet as if she had so freshly parted from the bowers of poetry that their odours still remained upon her robes."

'A Summer Night's Dream in the Hermitage at Sirmione' is what it professes to be—a dream: and it needs an interpreter; let all the Josephs of our acquaintance try their skill on the following description:—

"The air is heavy with perfume; it feels as if the choirs upon the pearly walls of heaven were shaking off the bright bloom from their gorgeous wings upon the winds of night. The element is full of light, as of a myriad radiant eyes looking down upon the earth from beneath their bright-veined lids, and the evening-glow glimmers amid the thick leaves, like the fingers of the spirit-moon hiding themselves in the dark ringlets of Endymion, when they sit together in some retreat for Echo in the glens of Thessaly. It is the bridal time of the earth and sky!"

The 'Execution of Calas,' professes to be genuine letter of the time. We doubt!

The paper 'on Poland,' is good and interesting. 'The Political Times,' is a declaration of opinion, and an acknowledgment that in politics the Magazine will be liberal. 'The Lord Chancellor's Levee,' is just what a magazine paper should be—it has personal interest without personalities, and is condensed and vigorous. 'The Life of a Sailor,' is but indifferent, and 'The Pacha of many Tales,' not much better.

As to the notices of new works, we shall say nothing. It may hereafter be worth while to trace the history of these little compact criticisms—these double distilled Magazine judgments—for the present, however, we only acknowledge to have read them, and, with a sincere recommendation to all parties interested, to substitute a comprehensive review of one or two important works, after the fashion of Blackwood and Fraser, we take leave of the subject, with grateful acknowledgments for the compliment paid to ourselves.

THE ENGLISHMAN.

Of the *Englishman*, we are happy to say the second number is an improvement. The opening article, 'The Pilgrimage to Glen Ora, by Christopher — in a Fytte,' is flighty, dreamy, and rhapsodical, but written with manifest power; we have strong suspicions that the writer is known to us, and to others who little suspect him.

'The Nature and Cure of the Indian Cholera' is a mistake—it is well written, and to many will be interesting; but it is better suited to a medical than a literary journal.

'The Slavery Question' gives an able retrospect of the rise, progress, proceedings, and objects of the Abolition Society, from its commencement in 1787. The subject is well treated, and the principles of the *Englishman* are a sure guarantee of the side it espouses, and the opinions it advocates: but really the question has been so hackneyed that nothing new remains to be said upon it; and although, from its importance, it ought not to have lost its interest, yet from its triteness we fear that it has, at least to the general reader. The lively little tale of 'Black and White,' given, as John Bunyan calls it, "under the similitude of a dream," is, to our thinking, a pleasanter way of enforcing the same principles.

'Scenes in Poland' is a spirited sketch, but too sketchy: the scenes and incidents, although powerfully drawn, lose half their interest for want of a connecting link in the narration.

The 'Notices of England, by a Yankee Oxonian,' [q.v. genuine?] are written with a vigorous spleen that reminds us of Hazlitt. Jonathan seems to take pleasure in "poking his fun" at Brother John; but it must be owned that his remarks on the state of Education in this country, abound in severe and wholesome truths. The *Englishman*, however, might (and as an Englishman should) have added, by way of commentary, that the vices of the old Education regime have received their death-blow from the new spirit that has gone forth through the land, and from the new Institutions that have arisen to embody that spirit.

'The School of Saint Simon' is an interesting and well-timed paper. There can be no doubt these Simonists will have their influence hereafter, and Englishmen have been long curious to know something about them—for although they have their journals and their missionaries in France, they have hardly been noticed by the press of England.

'The Recent Rambles in the footsteps of Don Quixote,' is nearly as pleasant as the former paper under that title; 'Bird Nesting' is sufficiently so; and the 'Dropping Glen' is likely to interest novel readers.

We observe that Master Anglicanus has upon our hint, taken down the sign of 'The Monthly Literary Gazette,' under which he at first retailed his critical notices, and which we considered but of ill omen for the quality of his brood. We did not, however, by our remark, court the high compliment, although we are most sensible of it, of his hanging out our standard in its place, as he has done by substituting the 'Journal of Literature,' as a title for this department of the Magazine. If, however, this change has arisen from a conviction of the force of our observations upon his previous most "ambiguous givings out," and if he mean zealously and honestly to join heart and hand with ourselves in the good cause we are advocating, we hail the fellowship of so talented an assistant, and receive him with pleasure under our own banner.

The poetical department in both these infant magazines is, as may be supposed from the high character of their respective editors, of loftier aspiration—and we may add, inspiration too—than the general run of periodicals. We extract a few stanzas, whereby our readers may,

at one view, form their own judgment of the relative merits of both these new candidates for public favour.

May Day—Sweet May!

Another year! and I am still among the sons of men,
And thou, my own dear sunny May, art greeting me again.

Fresh flowers are on the green sward, young blossoms on the bough,
The brook its tranquil orisons to Heaven is murmuring now.

How fresh is every gale that comes upon thy morning wings!

How sweet the carol of the lark that in mid ether sings!
The song of birds—the Summer song—gives life to every spray—

Both glads and grave are full of love and—May! sweet May!

The tomb of winter yields its dead to thy celestial power,
The glowing orb of day gives hues to herb, and tree, and flower.

Stern Winter's moody company of clouds hath fled the sky,
Sole monarch of an azure world, the Sun is riding high.

The breath of life breathes over earth, and e'en my heart is glad,
That many months of storms had made more weary, worn and sad.

With balmy incense teeming, earth salutes the welcome ray,
Above, around, the joys abound of May—sweet May!

For our own part, we will not offer an opinion that might wound the self-love of either of our respected cotemporaries—and they must allow that we have dealt fairly by them, for the two first lines in each of the above stanzas are extracted from a poetic gem that shines in the *Metropolitan* of this month, whilst the two latter lines in each, form part of a May-day garland that adorns the *Englishman*. How perfect, how complete, is this "union in partition" of these magazine muses, "whose double bosom seems to bear one heart." Who will deny that poets have kindred souls? Truly, "when they do agree, their unanimity is wonderful." Can anything be more responsive to the voice of the *Metropolitan* than the echo of the *Englishman*? It is "as fit as Tib's rush for Tom's forefinger."

Ah, sure a pair was never seen
So justly formed to meet by nature.
Arcades ambo
Et cantare pares, et respondere parati.

ORIGINAL PAPERS

BIBLIOTHEQUE DU ROI.

A very spirited memorial presented to the French government by the "Conservatoire de la Bibliothèque du Roi," printed in Paris last December, (but not for public sale,) forcibly demonstrates the anxious desire entertained by those ingenious and learned men who superintend that noble Institution, "to maintain, through each department, a superiority for which, under different aspects, the collections of Vienna, London, Petersburg, and Berlin have contended. They regret the insufficiency of their funds for the acquisition of such special libraries as those of Count MacCarthy or of Langlès—the collections of those medallists, M. Cousinier or M. Allier de Hauteroche—the antiques of M. de Choiseul-Gouffier, and the prints of M. Morel de Vindé. They represent, that during the administration of M. Amelot, 410,000 francs were granted for the purchase of Mariette's prints, and the rare books of La Vallière, various scarce works on Jurisprudence, and Pellerin's cabinet of medals. Under the ministry of Baron de Breteuil, 271,000 francs were allowed for similar acquisitions: the collection of Beaumarchais, the works on Natural History, of Cumus de Limare, the medals of Ennery; M. de Ge-

neste's collection of books printed in the 15th century, &c. For works published in France alone since 1784, a million of francs was found necessary to supply deficiencies."

The memorial notices many other objects, for which large sums were granted under different ministers. The Celtiberian medals of Flores, and Caillaud's first collection of Egyptian antiquities, the "Medailles du Cabinet Cousinier, et les papyrus Egyptiens de Casati," the Zodiac of Dendera, the medals of Durand and Cadalvene, the prints of Denon and of Desenne, &c. The Conservators feelingly lament the transportation into Russia of those Oriental MSS. which Rousseau, the French Consul General at Baghdad, had collected: among which, was "un grand nombre d'ouvrages importants que la Bibliothèque du Roi cherche vainement depuis long-temps;" and they fear that their Chinese library will no longer retain its pre-eminence, as the English have lately become so rich in this line of literature, that even an individual (Dr. Morrison) has formed a collection four times more considerable than that of the Bibliothèque du Roi; but in the purchase of his Chinese books they cannot, from want of funds, take any part. On the same account, they are obliged to leave unemployed the zeal and devotion of French agents and travellers, who might be so usefully occupied in collecting or transcribing MSS. Sanscrit, Tamul, Persian, Arabic, or Turkish, of which the historical and literary importance has long been acknowledged; and should the acquisition of such treasures be still forbidden by want of funds, the Oriental department of the Great French Library will soon be found inferior to collections already existing, or in a state of formation, at Petersburg, London, or even at Berlin.

The fine collection of Eastern MSS. belonging to the late M. Asselin de Chervillé, Consul at Cairo, is now on sale in Paris; but "les fonds ordinaires de la Bibliothèque" do not authorize even a hope of acquiring it. In London, the Sanscrit MSS. of General Stuart were lately sold. M. Belanger, who travelled in India, has brought to Paris many rare MSS. in the Pali language. It is announced that "la collection célèbre de Sir W. Ouseley" is to be sold: a "collection riche en Manuscrits Persans, tant modernes et musulmans, qu'anciens et appartenant à la religion des adorateurs de feu." And, soliciting an increase of their funds, the Conservators suggest the importance of having transcribed, in the public libraries at Constantinople, Smyrna, and Cairo, those rare Arabic works on history and geography "qui manquent en Europe; tels que les Voyages d'Ibn Batouta, les grands ouvrages d'Ibn-Khaldoun, de Masoudi, de Makrisi," &c. Respecting the departments of medals, gems, and other antiques, prints, maps, and plans, &c., we shall, in a future number, extract from this 'Mémoire' some interesting particulars.

SOME REMARKS ON THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF SHAKSPEARE, AND ON THE TRADITIONS OF HIS BIOGRAPHERS.

Professor Porson's opinion of Shakspeare was, that of all writers, ancient or modern, there was not one whose genius was to be compared to his, except, perhaps, Homer—of whom, when and where he was born, or whether he was the

sole author of the immortal poems attributed to him, are still points of controversy. Of Shakespeare, who lived at an interval of nearly three thousand years, it is remarkable that of his personal history almost as little is known.

Rowe, his first biographer, says the character of Shakespeare is best seen in his writings. This is true of his genius; but his individual character, or even the bias of his mind to particular opinions, will be there sought for in vain; and none have been transmitted to us by his contemporaries, except scanty generalities by Ben Jonson, and individual remarks by Hemminge and Cordall in the preface to their edition of his Plays.

John Shakespeare, the father of the poet, is variously represented: whether he was a glover, a butcher, or a dealer in wool, or all by turns, is very doubtful; and whether he was a ruined tradesman in the year 1586, and so destitute that, when a distress issued to seize his goods, he had no goods to seize, seems not to be more certain, although apparently supported upon documentary evidence. One fact, not sufficiently noticed, clouds this statement with suspicion: he died in the year 1601, and in 1596 he memorialized the Earl Marshal for a grant of arms, and had the grant allowed in 1599, when the fees of office were then, as to the relative value of money, the same as they are now, and could not have been obtained at a less expense than what would be an equivalent to fifty pounds of our money, exclusive of the present stamp-duty. On the coat of arms itself, as regards the respectability of Mr. John Shakespeare, it is also to be remarked that he had a motto assigned to him, *Non sanz droict*, in old French, and a falcon displayed for a crest, which in the reign of Elizabeth indicated some rank as a gentleman. I pass over the statement in the memorial in the Herald's College, that his great-grandfather, for his faithful and approved service to Henry VIII., was rewarded with a grant of lands and tenements; as those who contend for the inferiority of his birth and station, consider that as a mere fiction of office; which is rejecting written and contemporaneous testimony for conjecture beyond the ordinary bounds of credence.

All the facts known of Shakespeare from contemporary authority, are—"He was honest, and of an open and free nature, and an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions;"† and "that his mind and hand went together; and what he thought he uttered with that easiness, that he scarce ever made a blot in his papers."‡ This is all we know of his personal history, except what can be gleaned from parish registers.

He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, April 23, 1564, and married a farmer's daughter, whose name was Anne Hathaway, when he was little more than eighteen years old, and had three children, two daughters and a son. He left Stratford and went to London, where he became a player, and wrote for the stage; and, after acquiring a small independence, he retired to Stratford, and died there in 1616, on the 23rd of April, the anniversary of his birth.

Of his three children, his two youngest, a son and a daughter, were twins: the son died in his youth. The eldest daughter, whose name was Susanna, married a Dr. Hall, and died in 1649, leaving one daughter, born in February, 1608. His youngest daughter, Judith, married a Mr. Quiney, by whom she had three sons, all of whom died before their mother, leaving no issue. She died in 1662. The only daughter of Mrs. Susanna Hall, whose name was Elizabeth, was twice married, first to a person of the name of Nashe, and after his death to a Sir John Barnard, but left no issue by either husband; and upon her death,

† Ben Jonson's "Discoveries."

‡ Preface to the first folio edition of Shakespeare's Plays. 1623.

which happened in February, 1670, Shakespeare's descendants became extinct.

All these persons, together with Mrs. Hart, Shakespeare's sister, who lived thirty years after him, were capable of giving some details of his individual habits and character, but not one word is recorded on their authority; and Rowe, who first wrote his life at nearly a century after his death, has quoted none of them for any of his facts. Betterton, who was born nineteen years after Shakespeare's death, is referred to by him as the authority "for the most considerable of the passages relating to his life." But we have no evidence that Betterton ever received any account of him from his descendants; on the contrary, the probability is that he never did, or Rowe would have stated that fact, to give weight and authenticity to vague and improbable tales. Betterton appears to have been the Garrick of his day, and doubtless heard the current stories of his time; but story-telling, and even conversation, as my Lord Coke says, is slippery and uncertain, and no reliance can be placed on such authority. The stories of deer-stealing, and of his leaving Stratford to avoid a criminal prosecution, or persecution, (for it is doubtful which,) or of his holding horses at the door of the theatre for subsistence, if not mere fables, are unworthy of credit.

A controversy has been sustained among literary men, whether Ben Jonson was unenviable of Shakespeare's superior genius: Malone says "he persecuted his memory with clumsy sarcasm and restless malignity;" while Mr. Gifford contends that he was wholly without envy; and facts are adduced to support their respective opinions. This, however, seems to be clear on Ben Jonson's own showing, that the players had a greater admiration of Shakespeare than he had, and that they thought him not entirely free from a disposition to undervalue his genius; for when he said he wished Shakespeare had blotted a thousand lines, Ben Jonson says "they thought it a malevolent speech." And when he relates a ridiculous observation of Shakespeare's, he says, "There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned;" which betrays a frigid feeling. And his recording, for the information of posterity, that he had small Latin, and less Greek, seems not to bespeak that warmth which professes "to honour his memory as much as any on this side idolatry." R. D.

THE LATE CAPTAIN FOSTER, OF H.M.S. CHANTICLEER.

We observed, with great regret, a paragraph in the *Literary Gazette* of last week concerning the death of this officer, which is calculated to leave a false impression on the minds of many persons respecting that unfortunate event, and to create a painful uncertainty among his friends who are left to deplore so severe a loss. We are the more anxious to remove the bad tendency of this, from having observed it copied verbatim into the *Times* newspaper.

In the last number of the *Athenæum* we gave an authentic and full statement of this event, to which we may now add, that his remains were found floating near a place called *Palomatia*, where they were interred by the officer of the *Chanticleer* who found them. It was only a few miles above this place that the accident happened. In the Fort of St. Lorenzo, at Chagres, situated at the mouth of the river, a tablet was placed, with the permission of the Governor, in which is inserted a copper-plate, with the following inscription engraved on it:—

"This Tablet is erected by the late Senior Lieut. and officers of H.M.S. sloop CHANTICLEER, to perpetuate the Memory of their late Commander HENRY FOSTER, P.R.S., who was drowned in the River Chagres, on the 6th Feb. 1831, while measuring the difference of Longitude between Panama and Chagres. This talented and distinguished officer was employed in Nautical and Astronomical Science; having nearly completed his mission of three years duration. He fell at his post—ripe in honours but young in years. *Æt. 36.*"

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

ROYAL SOCIETY.

May 5.—His Royal Highness, the President, in the chair.—Three papers were read. The first was entitled, 'On the effects of hot water upon the Batrachia,' by Dr. Marshall Hall. The second, 'An account of a new method of propelling vessels,' by W. Hale, communicated by R. Penn, Esq. And the third, 'Additional thoughts on the use of the Ganglions in furnishing Electricity for the production of Animal Secretions,' by Sir Everard Home, Bart., F.R.S., &c. Joseph Hodgson, Esq. was admitted, and Charles James Beverly, Esq. was elected a Fellow. Among the presents, were 'Researches principally relative to the Morbid and Curative effects of Loss of Blood,' by Dr. Marshall Hall, and 'Proposed plan for the investigation of the due administration of blood-letting,' by the same—presented by the author.

ROYAL INSTITUTION.

April 29.—Mr. Faraday called the attention of the members and their friends to certain remarkable phenomena which have been found to attend metals during the conduction of heat from one to the other. We had occasion, in a recent number, to mention the fact, that when a plate of heated brass or copper is laid upon a thick piece of cold lead, certain sounds, more or less musical, are produced, and continued as long as the one metal remains moderately hot, and the other so cold that a considerable difference of temperature exists between them. The discovery was first made accidentally, by laying a heated poker, with the handle resting on a table, and the hot end on a piece of lead, when a coarse chirping sound was produced. The phenomenon once observed, a variety of experiments led to modifications of the form and quality of the metals which ultimately rendered the effect more striking than under the accidental circumstances that first produced the discovery. A piece of lead about three inches square and an inch thick, is laid on a table, and a plate of brass, four inches long, two inches wide, and about half an inch thick, being somewhat thicker in the middle throughout the whole of its length, than at the sides, is heated, and then laid on the lead, when the sound we have mentioned is immediately produced. The under surface of the brass has a longitudinal channel in the centre of it, whereby it is made to rest on the lead by bearing on the two edges of the channel. The sound sometimes resembles the singing of a kettle; at other times it is more strictly musical, and often varies in an instant through some harmonic interval, without any apparent cause for such change. The brass used in these experiments Mr. Faraday called a *rocker*, from its motion, which we will presently explain.

It was at first thought that this singular phenomenon depended upon some principle not hitherto discovered; but, upon a careful examination, it appears that the effect is referable to known causes, and may be explained without recourse to any new hypothesis.

Metals are all expanded by an increase of temperature, and (with some few exceptions) regain their former bulk when the heat is abstracted: but they possess this quality in very different degrees, and lead, of all others, is most expansible by heat. The metals also possess the power of conducting heat in an eminent degree; but lead is inferior to all the others in this property. Now, when the heated brass is laid upon the cold lead, the edges of the channel underneath bearing on it, if a slight touch be given to the rocker, so as to make it bear more on one edge than the other, the part of the lead under that edge will be expanded by the heat into a small ridge, which will lift the rocker,

while the part under the opposite ridge is naturally contracted by the removal of the heated metal above. The consequence is, that the rocker now falls on the other edge of the groove, which, again expanding, lifts the rocker in a contrary direction, and throws it back again; thus a continued rocking is produced, with such velocity as to produce a musical sound: we must, however, be careful to distinguish the sound made by the rapidity of the vibrations, and that yielded by the sonorous quality of the rocker itself, both of which are occasionally heard.

If the metals be of the same description, no such motion is produced; for, if a rocker of copper be laid on a plate of copper, as the conducting power of both plates is equal, and very great, the heat is conducted into the lower plate so rapidly, that no ridges are formed by the momentary contact. So, if both were of lead, we have little doubt that the ridges of the lower plate would lie in corresponding hollows of the upper plate, produced by the abstraction of heat, and so, we conceive, the experiment would fail. The heat of the brass rocker must never be sufficient to melt the lead, and the surfaces of both must be made perfectly clean.

There are some other particulars connected with these phenomena, which were well explained by Mr. Faraday, but as the subject does not involve any new principle, we shall here conclude our observations.

On the library table there was a very pretty contrivance to show the lateral resistance of dry sand inclosed in a tube. A weight of 50lbs. or more, had a cylindrical hole of near an inch diameter through it, from top to bottom; a square deal rod, half an inch thick, was put into the hole, and of course, did not nearly fill it, but when sand was poured in round the deal rod, such was the resistance offered to the sides of the hole, that the weight might be safely lifted by the rod.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.

May 5.—Henry Hallam, Esq., in the chair.—Philip Hardwick, Esq., a Fellow of the Society, addressed a communication to the Society with an ancient Roman monument, which was discovered in December last about fifteen feet under the surface of the ground, when digging for the foundations of the new Goldsmiths' Hall. Mr. Hardwick calls it an altar; it is of stone, about two feet in height, nine or ten inches wide, and about five inches in thickness. On the front face is sculptured, in high relief, the figure of an archer, probably intended for Apollo, as a laurel-branch is scored on each of the two sides; on the reverse or back-front there is an indistinct appearance of a tripod with an urn or vase standing on the same level with it. There is no inscription of any kind, but the relic is clearly of Roman origin, and was most probably cenotaphical. Besides the object itself, Mr. Hardwick submitted also two drawings of it.

The Secretary, Mr. Ellis, read a communication, addressed by himself to the President, from a report made to the government in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of the salaries and emoluments of the Barons and Officers of the Court of Exchequer, and of the Queen's Attorney and Solicitor General, showing their gradual increase. He next read, in continuation, from the Rev. Mr. Skinner's letters to Sir R. C. Hoare, Bart., on the site of Camalodunum, &c.

Two gentlemen, who had been previously elected, were personally admitted;—two others were severally balloted for and elected Fellows of the Society.

The Vice President read the names of the Committee appointed by the Council to superintend the publication of the Saxon and Norman, or early English manuscripts which the Society some time ago resolved to undertake.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

May 2.—The anniversary meeting took place this day, at which very satisfactory reports were read from the Auditors and Council, showing the state of the Society in every point of view. Its affairs certainly wear a much more cheerful aspect than this day last year, and encourage hopes that, at no very distant period, it will free itself from its ponderous embarrassments, having, under very disadvantageous circumstances, in the last eleven months, made an improvement of upwards of 2500*l*. The officers, council, and auditors were elected without opposition, and the meeting adjourned to—

May 3, when a communication from Mr. Knight was read, 'On the means of prolonging the duration of valuable varieties of fruits.' Many facts, which developed themselves in the course of Mr. Knight's numerous experiments, were stated—as also his conclusion that trees of the pear, the apple, and the plum, might be better raised by layers and cuttings of their roots, than by the methods usually practised, and at less expense, as the scions which spring from the roots, even of very old trees, possess remarkable vigour and power.

Keen's seedling strawberries and flat peaches of China were on the table, from the Society's garden; as were also several splendid *Pæonias*, the yellow *Rosa Banksie*, two sorts of *Schizanthus*, and many other attractive flowers, in a large collection, which accompanied them; these, with a handsome *Calceolaria* from Messrs. Young's nursery, some *Ericas* and other plants from Messrs. Chandler & Co., completed the exhibition.

Mr. Lindley having kindly consented, at the request of the Council of the Horticultural Society, to deliver three lectures on Botany, as it applies to horticulture, commenced on Wednesday afternoon in the Society's meeting room in Regent Street. The justly-acquired popularity which Mr. Lindley has attained in his works on the subject—the interest which attaches to his lectures at the London University, and the increasing number of votaries to the study of botany, under the Jussucian banners, drew together a large audience. The three organic components—cellular tissue, vascular tissue, and fibre—were exemplified by drawings from highly-magnified subjects; the forms appertaining to each in their varied combinations, and the extreme minuteness of matter, were explained at considerable length. Some idea of the latter may be formed from the statement, that 5100 cells or vessels occupied a space not greater than half a cubic line.

The readiest specimens of cellular tissue may be seen in the flowers of plants, in the substance known under the name of rice-paper, which is itself the pith of a Chinese plant, belonging to the mallow tribe, and is much used in the manufacture of the best artificial flowers; and in the orange, all the pulpy parts of which are one mass of it. That most remarkable portion of the vascular tissue, the spiral vessels, was fully expatiated on; as was also the use of tissue, in conveying fluids, although destitute of pores,—the great rapidity of its production, and its enormous expansive force.

Mr. Lindley then proceeded to describe the powers of absorption of the fibres and points of the roots—their wonderful capabilities of conveying nutriment—and the different tissues of which they are composed;—the great evaporation from the leaf, especially in deciduous plants through its cellular cuticle, to the extent, in some instances, of seventeen times as much as the human body, and in extremely dry weather much more; and in the case of the sun-flower, according to Hales, to the amount of 1*lb*. 4*oz*. per day;—the ascent of the nutriment by the albumen—its passage into the leaf and return by the medullary rays to the heart wood,—the absorp-

tion of oxygen by the leaves during night, thereby rendering fruit more palatable in the morning than in the evening, and its expulsion of it by day;—the dependence of vegetables on light, and the chemical action of the atmosphere for the maintenance of their natural colours and qualities;—the superiority of the melon, by the great exposure of its leaves;—the abundance in the produce even of the potato, when not suffered to choke itself; and the poisonous qualities of the celery negated by the modes adopted for its cultivation;—the advantage of iron over wooden conservatories; and finally, the notice of Professor Schultz's observations, at Berlin, on the circulation of the fluids in plants, which is manifested to a great degree in the *Ficus Elastica*, when subjected to microscopic examination, by the transmission of the reflected solar rays. The demonstrations and illustrations were so clear and descriptive, and treated in so familiar a style, that we look forward with pleasure to the subject being resumed on the 18th instant.

LINNÆAN SOCIETY.

May 3.—A. M. Lambert, Esq., V.P., in the chair.—The secretary read a catalogue of the rarer indigenous plants growing in the neighbourhood of Tring, communicated by Richard Chambers, Esq., a Fellow of the Society; and also a supplement to the first part of the Catalogue of New Holland Birds, in the Museum of the Society, by N. A. Vigors, Esq. and Dr. Horsfield.

John Dilwynn, George Don, and Charles Smith, Esqs., were elected Fellows of the Society, and certificates in favour of Joseph Janson, N. C. Strickland, William Vallantine, J. M. White, Esqs., and Mr. Joseph Paxton, were read, and ordered to be suspended in the meeting-room as usual.

Auditors were appointed to inspect the accounts of the Society for the last twelve months, preparatory to the Anniversary to be held on the 24th inst.; and Professor Ehrenberg, of Berlin, Adrian De Jussieu, of Paris, Dr. Ruppel, of Frankfurt, and Professor Hornemann, of Copenhagen, were elected Foreign Members of the Society.

The Memoirs of the Royal Academies of Science of Paris and Berlin, the fifth number of 'Gould's Century of Birds,' and 'Lea's Parrots,' with other donations, were on the table.

MEDICO-BOTANICAL SOCIETY.

April 26.—Humphrey Gibbs, Esq., Treasurer, in the chair.—The following presents were announced as having been received since the last meeting: by J. W. Bennett, Esq., his 'Treatise on the Cocoa-Nut Tree'; by the Pharmaceutical Society of Paris, the Fourth Number of their Transactions; by Thomas Gibbs, Esq., recent specimens of Medical and other Plants; by Dr. Brera, Professor of Therapeutics in the University of Padua, 'Nuova desideratum e di specie affini'; by Lieut. Friend, R.A., a Table of Fruits found in the Bayer Malacca. Communications, by Dr. Hamilton of Plymouth, were read on 'A febrifuge bark of a tree called El Malambo, the produce of South America,' and on the 'Hibiscus Abelmoschus.' Gilbert Burnett, Esq., the Professor of Botany, delivered a very interesting lecture on the natural orders, Melanthaceæ and Colchaceæ. Notice was given, that the Professor of Chemistry would deliver a lecture on the Chemical History of those Plants at the next meeting of the Society, to be held on the 10th May. Dr. Powell and Capt. R. Collins were proposed as Fellows.

CAMBRIDGE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

A meeting was held on the 25th ultimo, the Very Rev. the Dean of Peterborough (the President) being in the chair. The first part of a

paper by Professor Whewell was read, containing a mathematical exposition of some of the leading doctrines of Mr. Ricardo's 'Principles of Political Economy and Taxation.' There was also read, by Professor Airy, a description of an apparatus constructed under his direction, and of the properties of elliptically-polarized light exhibited by means of it: it was stated that the phenomena had been found to agree in the most precise manner with the results previously obtained by calculation. After the meeting, Professor Henslow exhibited a number of the appearances of what have been called "spectral wheels," produced by the rotation of two wheels, one behind the other.

Conceiving that the proceedings of this society would be of general interest, we determined to make such arrangements as should enable us to report them in the *Athenæum*. On the best inquiry, however, it appears to our Correspondent that the report given in the *Cambridge Chronicle* is extremely accurate, and very well abridged. We shall, therefore, avail ourselves of it, making such additions only as our friend may suggest. On the present occasion we have to observe, that the object of Professor Whewell's paper was stated to be to show in what manner mathematical investigation may be applied to those portions of political economy in which it is assumed that truth consists in exact logical deductions from a few simple and universal principles. The principles which are thus made the basis of the science, according to Mr. Ricardo's system, were stated to be *fee*; namely, the postulate of *rent*, the postulate of *wages*, the postulate of *profits*, the postulate of *price*, and the postulate of *equilibrium*. It was observed that several of these principles seem to be limited in their extent, and by no means strictly true; and that the postulate of wages cannot be considered even as an approximation to the truth: but that this circumstance did not interfere with the peculiar object of the memoir, which was, to express these principles in mathematical language, to deduce their consequences by the methods which thus become applicable, and to compare these results with the conclusions at which Mr. Ricardo and his followers have arrived. The reading of the paper was to be resumed at the next meeting.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

MONDAY.	{ Geographical Society Nine, P.M.
	{ Medical Society Eight, P.M.
TUESDAY.	{ Medico-Botanical Eight, P.M.
	{ Medico-Chirurgical Nine, P.M.
	{ Institution of Civil Engineers Eight, P.M.
WEDNES.	{ Geological Society past 8, P.M.
	{ Society of Arts past 7, P.M.
THURSD.	{ Royal Society past 8, P.M.
	{ Society of Antiquaries Eight, P.M.
FRIDAY.	{ Royal Institution past 8, P.M.
	{ Astronomical Society Eight, P.M.
SATURD.	Westminster Medical Society, Eight, P.M.

FINE ARTS

ROYAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION.

It is not without great reluctance that we come personally before our readers; but overzeal has led to over-exertion; and as nothing would satisfy the doctors but quiet, we were sent to admire nature instead of art, and have been inhaling the pure, thin, fresh air of the Surrey hills, instead of the warm, substantial, oleaginous compound of the Academy. As, however, they were indulged before all others with a notice of the Sculpture, we trust they can "restrain their curiosity for a while," at least for a week, so far as the Paintings are concerned. We have on our return cast an eye hastily over the Exhibition, and may report generally, that it does great credit to English art; there is in our opinion visible improvement—the President himself has improved! Pickersgill has some fine portraits, Hilton some fine pictures; Turner is admirable,

yet has a "most rare monster" to divide attention; Calcott is delightful; Constable is Constable; Leslie better than ever. We shall dispute with the *Times* critic about *My Uncle Toby* and the *Widow*, and we have a good word to say in favour of Wilkie's *Lady Lyndhurst*, but we defer all till next week.

WATER-COLOUR EXHIBITION.

We shall now run hastily over these delightful pictures.

No. 2. *St. Mark's Place, Venice*, is by PROUT; and though *St. Mark's Place*, and this particular view of it especially, will not give to Englishmen the least idea of Venice, it gives a very excellent one of *St. Mark's Place* itself, which is so far peculiar, that it is almost the only spot in that strange city where a man can stretch his legs in the open air without the hazard of being "found drowned," or dragged out of a canal by a boat-hook comfortably buried three inches under his short ribs. Prout, who sees with a poet's eye, and always hits the right spirit and character of a spot, has introduced all the strange varieties of the animal, man, that are usually to be met with here, and which give the scene such a strange and peculiar character. The picture, however, has not his usual power; and the same may be said of other Venetian scenes in this exhibition. But No. 139, *Wartzburg, Bavaria*, is a fine and effective picture, and well sustains the high character of the artist. We like it even better than on the first view.

No. 3. *Belinda*—No. 149. *The Governess*—No. 181. *Jenny Deans, &c.*, by the Misses SHARPE. We choose to class these ladies together, for it is very difficult to distinguish their works. We spoke, in our first notice, with well-deserved commendation of some of these pictures. They are most elaborately finished, and will bear attentive examination; 'Belinda' especially. The sprites are perhaps too distinctly made out: they are too substantial for creatures of the air; but the variety and freedom of attitude in these little manikins is truly excellent. There is too much stiffness and formality in all these pictures, but still there is grace and elegance; those ladies delight too much in drawing-rooms, and artificial manners, yet have the merit of keeping clear of affectation.

No. 10. *A View from the Downs near Charlton-Kings*, by W. TURNER, is a brilliant picture, with all the fresh reality of nature. Other pictures by the same artist, are entitled to the same commendation.

No. 20. *Grouse Shooting in the Isle of Sky*. G. F. ROBSON. The cocknies, who judge of mountain scenery from occasional visits to Traitor's Hill, and Primrose Hill, insist on it that Robson's colouring is not natural—this ought to silence them: it is nature itself; heath, moorland, and mountain, in all their truth and beauty, with the dark, black waters, lustrous in deep shadow, like a jewel in the zone of night.

No. 22. *London Bridge in 1740*, by G. PYNE, is an interesting and a clever picture.

No. 35. *Vessels at Spithead*, COPLEY FIELDING. If the visitor has not yet caught a glimpse of No. 158. *Shipwreck on the Coast of Yorkshire*, he may bestow all the tediousness of his admiration on this picture, and leave his friend leisure to contemplate the latter—one of the finest works in water-colour it has ever been our good fortune to look on.

No. 42. *Infant Bacchus*, J. STEPHANOFF. A clever picture, and, as it is not spoiled with affectation, we are glad of the opportunity of saying a civil thing of an artist of great merit.

No. 45. *The Captives*. G. CATTERMOLE. A picture to which we can conceive objections may be made by men more conversant with the detail and mechanism of art than we pretend to be, but full of character and power; broad and

bold in its general effect, and, in our judgment, worth a hundred superfine colourings. Other pictures by the same artist are open to the same objections, but deserve the same praise.

No. 64. *Evening*. G. BARRET. This artist is at times only inferior to Claude—there's heresy! there's barbarism!

No. 71. A splendid and finely-composed picture. Mr. Harding has benefited by his continental tour—he now paints with a pencil that has been dipped in the light of Italian skies.

No. 79. *Dolbadern Castle and Llanberis Lake*. COPLEY FIELDING. We make mention of this picture, because it is announced as one about to be engraved for the forthcoming Gallery of the Society—the selection speaks well of the taste that directs this interesting work.

No. 170. By F. NASH, and 201, MACKENZIE, are both clever. In the "composition," Mr. Mackenzie remembered Milan.

No. 414. *Titania and the Indian Boy*. CRISTALL and BARRET. We have so few of Cristall's pictures now, that we set the more value on them. The figures here are as full of classical grace, as if they were copied from an ancient vase.

We have not room to notice more at present; and delightful pictures are always studded so thick on the walls of this Exhibition, that we have never time to be critical—before we can cocker ourselves up into ill-humour, our eye is caught by some graceful, natural, or pleasant picture, and the offender escapes our recollection.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Sampson carrying away the Gates of Gaza. Designed and engraved by J. G. S. Lucas. London, 1831. Lacey.

A work of sufficient merit to make us regret that the artist should follow servilely in the footsteps of another.

Ancient Building. R. P. BONINGTON, del.; C. G. LEWIS, sculpt. London, 1831. Colnaghi, Son & Co.

A rich little architectural sketch—one of those interesting subjects that make an artist's portfolio so delightful.

R. P. BONINGTON, Esq. Painted by Margaret Carpenter, and engraved by J. P. Quilley. London, 1831. Carpenter & Son.

A portrait that does great credit to the lady artist; and though we might make trifling objections to Mr. Quilley's engraving, it is, on the whole, a well-executed work, and will be most acceptable to the public.

MUSIC

SOCIETÀ ARMONICA

Fifth Concert—Monday, May 2.

THESE Concerts, which are given at the great Room in the King's Theatre upon the alternate Mondays with those of the Philharmonic Society, seem to be well attended. The subscription is very moderate, being only three guineas per double ticket for six concerts. It is probably a recollection of this which induces the subscribers to come with only moderate expectations, for we have seldom observed a more easily satisfied audience than that of Monday night last. Perhaps we are fastidious—perhaps the Philharmonic spoils us for all other Concerts; and yet, perhaps not;—for so great is our love for music, that we can listen with pleasure to a street-organ, provided the air it plays be pretty and the organ in tune. We only wish that what we have should be good of the sort. The orchestra here is sufficiently numerous, but numbers alone won't do all that is wanted, or else 'God save the King' would never be so well sung as at a theatre when the audience joins in chorus; and this we be-

lieve is admitted not to be the case. Mr. Mori did not seem to be over-pleased with those he was playing with, for we never detected a smile upon his face except now and then, when some one of his partners refused to follow his lead. The vocal department was, in some respects, tolerably well filled. The trio from 'Azor and Zemira,' by Madame Stockhausen, Miss Hughes, and Mr. Wilson, was well enough. Signor Santini's 'Qui Sdegno' of Mozart, good; and Madame Stockhausen's Swiss airs, as usual, excellent; but then we had a song in each act by Miss Kate Williams, "from Italy"—not originally from Italy, we should think, by the name. We have a great objection to finding fault with ladies, but where there is nothing else to find, what can we do? We shall content ourselves with recommending to Miss Williams a speedy return "to the place from which she came" as being her only chance of learning the way to the "place of execution," for in that, among other things, she is sadly deficient. A fantasia of Drouet's for the flute was very creditably played by a Mr. Card, in evident imitation of the author; but the best we heard was a duet for violin and pianoforte, by Messrs. Mori and Forbes: Mr. Mori's fine tones and brilliant execution were worth nearly all the rest of the Concert put together, and immediately changed the subscription, as far as that evening was concerned, from moderate to cheap.

THEATRICALS

DRURY LANE.

We gave last week a short notice, in general terms, of the production and well-merited success of Mr. Sheridan Knowles's new historical play, called 'Alfred the Great; or, the Patriot King.' The expressions we used were strongly favourable. We have since read it, and our impressions are confirmed. When it was announced, we confess we feared that Mr. Knowles was about to waste the sweetness of his poetry upon a somewhat desert ground—we only mean desert, as having been so much trodden on. The author, however, knew his own powers better than we did, and he has proved us to have been mistaken. His treatment of the subject has given it all the freshness of novelty. Although there is necessarily nothing very new in the plot, yet are the incidents so good, so varied, and so skilfully managed, that an interest is awakened at the commencement, which never flags, at least to those who go to a play to hear the actors talk and not themselves. If we add to this, or rather as Mr. Knowles has added to it, a running accompaniment of beautiful language, we are at a loss to say what else is wanting to constitute a fine play. We know no tragic writer of modern times, who so happily hits that medium between loftiness and colloquialism, which is best fitted for an acting drama. Our only objection is to the latter part of the fifth act, the ending of which is too melodramatic and too abrupt; but there is nothing so difficult as to terminate a play well, and the difficulty is the greater in proportion to the interest which its progress has excited. This awkwardness will never be removed until some one has the boldness to end a piece without drawing up kings, queens, lords, and commons in a line, to bow to the audience. If this be not the reason why the cleverest writers cannot produce as strong an impression with their last act as with any of the others, we should be glad to be told what is.

A writer in the *Morning Chronicle*, in one of the most unfair and unjust criticisms which it ever fell to our misfortune to read, has thought fit to give it as his opinion, that this play "would have been inevitably damned but for the accidental circumstances attending its produc-

tion." We complain of translations from the French—we cry out for men of original genius to write for the stage; and, when the call is answered by one, this is the treatment he receives. Can we wonder that Byron would not, and that Scott and Moore will not, run a similar risk? At all events we shall do our duty by recording our opinion that Mr. Knowles's 'Alfred' is so well constructed, and so ably written, that it must have succeeded under any circumstances, at any time, and in any theatre, even though the acting of it should not have been more than half as good as it is at Drury Lane. That it will prove extensively attractive, is too much to assert of anything in the present state of theatricals; but that it *ought*, we think there cannot be a difference of opinion among impartial people. Repeating our praise of Mr. Macready for the excellence of his personation of *Alfred*, and offering to Miss Phillips our warmest admiration for her beautiful conception and charming delineation of the gentle *Ina*, we shall proceed to prove our assertions in favour of the language by a few extracts;—yet before we do so, it would be unjust not to say that the play was generally well supported, and to particularize Mrs. C. Jones, whose cottage scene with *Alfred* was worthy of Mrs. Davenport.

FRIENDSHIP.

Oswith is asked "what heavy debt" he has incurred to make him offer up his life as a sacrifice to save his friend.

Oswith. And think'st thou Friendship barbers kindnesses?

'Tis not because that such or such a time
He help'd my purse, or stood me thus or thus
In stead, that I go bound for him, or take
His quarrel up! With friends, all services
Are ever gifts that glad the donor most.
Who rates them otherwise, he only takes
The face of friend to mask a usurer.
I give my life for him, not for the service
He did me yesterday, or any day,
But for the love I bear him every day,
Nor ask if he returns!

PARENTAL LOVE.

Guthrum is enraged against his prisoner—his daughter *Ina* intercedes to soothe him.

Ina. Father!
Guthrum. Ah, thou ever art
My sweet and welcome calm, that glads me, sun-like,
When summer days are breathless with the joy
Of his enriching beam. I'm smooth again—
Not a ruffle!—not a ruffle!

ADVERSITY.

Alfred. So much for poverty! Adversity's
The nurse for kings; but then the palace gates
Are shut against her! They would else have hearts
Of mercy oftner—gems not always dropped
In fortune's golden cup. What thought hath he
How hunger warpeth honesty, whose meal
Still waiteth on the hour? Can he perceive
How nakedness converts the kindly milk
Of nature into ice, to whom each change
Of season—yea, each shifting of the wind
Presents his fitting suit? Knows he the storm
That makes the valiant quail, who hears it only
Through the safe wall—its voice alone can pierce;
And there talks comfort to him with the tongue
That bids without the shelterless despair?
Perhaps he marks the mountain wave, and smiles,
So high it rolls!—white on its fellow hump
The fainting seaman, glaring down at death
In the deep trough below! I will extract
Riches from penury—from sufferings
Coin blessings—that if I assume again
The sceptre, I may be the more a king,
By being more a man!

We have not room for more, or we could fill the paper with extracts of equal, or even greater beauty.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THE new comedy called 'The Exquisites,' which we slightly mentioned last Saturday as having been well received on its production the night before, fairly deserved the success it met with. The author, Don Telesforo de Trueba, a Spaniard, is already favourably known to the English public through the medium of more than one novel. There is a boldness which we like in his coming among us, witnessing our

follies, and then employing our own language, and our own professional countrymen, to show us up to one another. His principal object seems to be, to attack our national vanities and national prejudices, by showing that Englishmen can be thoughtless and heartless, and that a foreigner may possibly be a man of feeling and honour. This lesson would perhaps have been useful to many in the year 1814, but it is scarcely needed now. The general peace has allowed Mr. Bull's judgment to form itself upon a closer and calmer review of his continental neighbours, and the result, with all reasonable people, has been, a conclusion that the proportions of good and bad are pretty equally distributed throughout, among the various members of human nature's large family. We do not mean to charge Englishmen exclusively with having indulged in national prejudice, because the same feeling had been carefully fostered in France, for instance, against the English, and was, to our own knowledge, in full force at the close of the last war. If we believed that frogs were the principal food of the French nation, they as firmly believed that, from the king to the peasant, our kitchen offered no other variation than from *Bifteck* et *pommes de terre* to *Rosbif* et *pommes de terre*. "My name is Barnaby Bounce, and I hate the French," was fully answered across the water by "Je m'appelle Jean François Baptiste, et je deteste les Anglais." That these prejudices were not confined to the lower classes, may be gathered from the two following, among many other facts. Just before leaving France to return to England in 1817, we were gravely asked by a French *dame de condition*, whether it was not quite true that "no English lady ever went to bed without having a bottle of brandy under her pillow." And, as a set-off against this, we had no sooner returned, and reported our arrival to an elderly relative, than we received a letter from him acknowledging ours, and commencing—"My dear Boy, I sincerely congratulate you and your family upon your safe return from the land of capering, false-hearted, blood-thirsty Frenchmen."—But to return to the Don. Although there is nothing new in his play, either of character or incident, and nothing particularly striking in the language, yet it is written in a light and lively strain, and put together with no inconsiderable dramatic tact. It is not a piece which can keep any lengthened possession of the stage—but it is one which we can recommend as a very agreeable pastime. If it do not much instruct, it will not fail to amuse. As a production, it would be creditable to a native—it is, therefore, at least doubly so to a foreigner. It was strongly cast, and consequently ably supported. Mrs. Gibbs, Miss Ellen Tree, Mrs. Keeley, Miss Nelson, Mr. Charles Kemble, Mr. Keeley, Mr. Abbott, Mr. Bartley, and Mr. Blanchard, all did the most for their respective parts; but if we were to select any particular one for praise, we should take Mr. Abbott; his first dress was capital, and his tone of voice and deportment combined to make out an excellent picture of the military Exquisite in plain clothes. It is true that the Exquisites are rather a *passée* than a passing race, but there is still a sufficient cross of the breed extant among fashionable noodles to keep it fresh in our remembrance. Our author has begun so well, that we recommend him to continue, not doubting that he will improve as he goes on.

THE QUEEN'S THEATRE.

We paid a visit to this house on Tuesday in time to see 'Peccadilloes' and 'The French Spy.' We had heard that it had been better attended lately than formerly, and were glad to find the report confirmed upon inspection. 'Peccadilloes' is a two-act farce, in which two Spanish gentlemen make love, each to the other's wife, and by

the counter-plotting of the ladies, who become mutual confidantes, are detected, exposed, and ultimately, of course, pardoned. The ladies are assisted by a sort of *Figaro* man-servant and a waiting-woman. The piece has a good deal of bustle and fun about it, and the writing is pleasant, and frequently smart. The principal demand for good acting is made to fall on Mr. Green and Mrs. Humby, who personate the two servants; and it is wisely so made, because by them the call is sure to be answered: Mr. Green is quite the pink of easy, off-hand, meddling valets; and Mrs. Humby, with her laughing eyes, her unconscious consciousness, and her droll, who'd-have-thought-it, silver-wire voice, is the most exquisite of waiting-maids to get anybody into or out of a hobble. We cannot say a great deal for either the singing or acting of Miss Dix or Miss Vernon, but they got on tolerably well—Miss Vernon, on both points, having rather the best of it. The music, by Mr. Grattan Cooke, already known as the best oboe-player in England, is very pretty, and has, altogether, great promise about it. He is treading well and firmly in the path so ably marked out by his clever father, and we are glad to observe that his inclination leads him to theatrical composition. His music, which seemed to give general satisfaction, was safe in the hands of Mr. Bennett, and more than safe in those of Mr. E. Seguin. We have before had occasion to speak of Mr. Seguin's magnificent voice and well-cultivated style of singing, and we are happy in again bearing testimony to both. Let him continue his exertions, and he will, ere long, have passed the comparatively short road which lies between his present station and the summit of his profession.

The last piece was 'The French Spy.' This is a regular, or rather irregular, cut and thrust melo-drame, in which the French are before Algiers, and Algiers before the French. There is insisting and resisting, and attacking and defending, and courage and cowardice, and fighting and dancing, and heading and be-heading, and the Algerines and the French blow one another up—only the first do it with words, and the second with gunpowder: so that the Algerines lose the Dey, and the French gain the day, until at the conclusion (to use the words of Marshal Bournmont), "*Le pavillon du Roi flotte sur le Palais du Dey.*" For those who like such matters it is better perhaps than the generality. Then there is a Madlle. Celeste, who really plays very cleverly and with great animation. Her pantomime is excellent, and she dances and fights until one doubts which she does best. Finally, there is our old friend Mr. Wilkinson, who is a conscript with an inherent antipathy to danger, and whose cowardice is so complete, that it is enough to make the piece itself run.

FRENCH PLAYS—HAYMARKET.

M. Pelissié arranged a very delightful evening for us on Wednesday, and we were truly glad to observe that his efforts were so well rewarded. We never remember to have seen the house so full. The gallery, which is not generally used, was filled by the overflow from the pit. M. Brunet was admirable, as usual, in 'Jocrisse Maître et Jocrisse Valet,' but there is not much to praise in the piece itself. The comedy of 'Madame du Barri,' which followed, gave us an opportunity of seeing Madame Albert in a character which is not only infinitely better in itself, but far better suited to her powers, than that in which we noticed her last week. Her forte is evidently comedy, and we are glad to have seen her in the one in question, not only on account of the gratification it afforded us, but because we should else (though quite innocently) have allowed a very charming actress to leave the kingdom without doing full justice to her talents. The play is beautifully written; it

exhibits a portion of the plots, counterplots and intrigues of the court of Louis XV., in which *Madame du Barri*, his mistress, is constantly opposed to *Le Maréchal de Richelieu*. The alternations of love and jealousy, hope and fear, ambition and humility, mistrust and confidence, with which the character abounds, were seized by Madame Albert with great judgment, and depicted with a force and delicacy which we seldom find united but on the French stage. Her ultimate triumph over *Richelieu* was something very nearly approaching to the triumph of her art. M. Laporte was exquisite in *Le Comte Jean du Barri*; Mdlle. Florval more than respectable in *Cécile*. The remainder of the characters were very fairly supported—and the dresses at once splendid and appropriate. As a whole, the play was a great treat, and we regret that we cannot see it again this season. In the vaudeville called 'Le Procès du Fandango, ou, La Fandangomanie,' which concluded the entertainments of the evening, we had an opportunity of seeing Madame Albert in a character of broad humour. She was here, if possible, still more in her element than before, and her natural *gaieté de cœur* so completely developed itself that we could easily account for her assumed grief, in the *Valentine* of last week, having appeared to us to sit uneasily upon her. She danced the fandango with much grace, and altogether in a style which would have done credit to the larger house on the opposite side of the way. She was, in the acting part, ably supported by M. Pelissié;—and here again M. Laporte was—M. Laporte. We should be sorry to see him anybody else.

THE DRAMATIC WRITINGS BILL.

To the Editor of the *Athenæum*.

SIR,—A considerable number of gentlemen having written to me for information relative to the Dramatic Writings Bill, perhaps you will not consider me presumptuous if I communicate, through the medium of your widely-circulated paper, an account of the position in which that subject stands.

Feb. 22, 1830. The Hon. George Lamb moved for leave to bring in a bill to alter and extend the provisions of the act of the 54th Geo. III. c. 156. Mr. Lamb said, "I had a great deal which I intended to say upon the subject, but at this late hour, and in the present state of the house, I shall not offer the remarks with which I had proposed to trouble the house. I shall merely state, that the object of the bill, which I seek to introduce, will be, to take away from managers of theatres the right of acting plays, without first obtaining the consent of authors. It will also provide, that when a play shall be once acted, it cannot be represented at other theatres without a like consent upon the part of the author, who will thus become entitled to remuneration from all parties, seeking to derive advantage from his labours."

The hon. member concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill to the effect stated; and, the motion having been seconded, leave was given, and the bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lamb and Sir James Mackintosh.

Feb. 24. Mr. Lamb presented his bill; when it was read a first time, and ordered to be printed.

March 4. On the motion of Mr. Stanley, it was read a second time, and ordered to be committed on Monday, March 8.

March 8. The house having resolved itself into a committee on this bill, the clauses were agreed to, and the house having resumed, the report was ordered to be brought up on the morrow.

March 9. Mr. Croker brought up the report of this bill, and it was recommitted for Mar. 10.

March 10. The committee deferred till the next day.

March 11. Deferred till March 24.

March 24. Deferred till April 22.

April 22. No house.

In the ensuing parliament the subject will be introduced by Lord Mahon; who has kindly undertaken to give his attention to it. Previous to its introduction, however, the general subject will, I believe, have the still farther advantage of being taken into consideration by a select number of noblemen and gentlemen, who have been pleased to consider it worthy their most attentive consideration. Dramatic authors may, therefore, now, I hope, look forward with confidence to the time when they shall cease to sow for other men to reap.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

CHARLES BUCKE.

Pulteney Terrace, May 2, 1831.

MISCELLANEA

Royal Society of Literature.—From a notice in the *Law Magazine*, (a work we take this opportunity of recommending to professional men,) we learn, with great regret, that the Pensions to the Associates are about to be discontinued. This Society always appeared to us among the humbugs of the day, and, except for the one hundred a year allowed to these ten men, should have been long since held up to the ridicule its pretensions so justly deserved; but charity is a redeeming virtue;—the government of this country does little enough for science and literature, and we were therefore content that the Society should drive on at the price of a thousand a year: but a suspension of payments is the day of its dissolution; quarter-day is the limitation of its existence, unless it discharge its obligations. We are strenuous advocates for economy, but with the published Pension List in existence, we can never consent that the first fruit shall be to deprive such men as Coleridge, Sir W. Ouseley, W. Roscoe, and like men of their miserable pittance.

The Library of the British Museum opens to the public this Saturday for the first time, and will continue open, in future, at the usual hours, on Saturday as well as other days throughout the year, excepting three weeks holidays—at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas.

Victor Hugo has lately presented the Parisians with a novel, entitled '*Notre-Dame de Paris*,' which has met with the most rapid sale, having, during the month, arrived at a fifth edition. The reader is carried back to the age of Louis XI., and the French critics say, with the magic of Sir Walter.

Blair's Harbour—Malay Coast.—A rock has been discovered in this harbour which shows itself at low water, and is dangerously situated for vessels that frequent it. It lies at a short distance from the northernmost outer island, leaving a deep channel between them. At a short distance from it is five, six, and seven fathoms in all directions. The extremes of this northern island bear from N. 4W. to N.N.E. 4 E. This rock is not laid down in any plan or chart that we have seen of this harbour, and is not noticed in the valuable surveys of Horsburgh.

Capt. Norton's Rifle Shells.—A successful experiment was made with these projectiles, by the inventor, on the 23rd ult., in presence of the Master-General of the Ordnance, and several other distinguished officers. A box of formed of oak and elm, containing powder in an inclosure, was placed at the distance of 50 yards, which on being struck by the shell instantly exploded. The discharge was made from a regulation rifle, the end of the ramrod used being

concave, to avoid pressure on the percussion caps.

The French, it seems, have determined to place another statue of Napoleon on the column in the Place Vendôme, the one which originally stood there having been destroyed: the different sculptors of Paris, it is said, have been solicited to contend for the honour.

The few remaining friends of the Bourbon dynasty, determined enemies as they were heretofore to the liberty of the press, are now glad to avail themselves of that power: they have actually formed at Paris a society for the publication of pamphlets in defence of the expelled government! The writers engaged by this notable association, are said to be those who were formerly employed on the *Drapeau Blanc*.

Novel Patriotic Contribution.—The people of Hayti have sent 10,600 lbs. of coffee for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the French patriots who fell in the memorable three days of July.

Bible and Missionary Societies.—The annual meetings of these societies, which took place this week at the Exeter Hall, show the immense results to be obtained by association. The Bible Society has added to the annual receipts of the last year 10,400l., the total sum raised for the last year being 55,424l. 2s. 3d., and the gross sum received, above seven millions. The Church Missionary Society's last year's subscriptions were stated to amount to 46,000l.

METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL

Days of Week.	Thermom.	Barometer.	Winds.	Weather.
	Max. Min.	Noon.		
Th. 23	59 43	29.00	S.	Rain.
Fr. 29	61 47	29.00	S. to S.W.	Ditto.
Sat. 30	68 45	29.00	S.W.	Ditto.
Sun. 1	67 43	29.05	S.W. to S.	Showers.
Mon. 2	64 47	29.30	N. to N.E.	Ditto.
Tues. 3	66 47	29.25	S.W.	Rain, A.M.
Wed. 4	68 40	Stat.	S. to W.	Clear.

Prevailing Clouds.—Cirrostratus, Cumulostratus, Nimbus.

Mean temperature of the week, 54°.

Astronomical Observations.

Saturn stationary on Thursday.
Moon in apogee on Friday, at 7h. A.M.
Venus's geocentric long. on Wed. 13° 16' in Gemini.
Mars's — — — — 9° 0' in Cancer.
Sun's — — — — 13° 14' in Taurus.
Length of day on Wed. 14h. 50m.; increased, 7h. 10m.
Sun's hourly motion 2' 25". Logarithmic number of distance on Sun. .003555.

Athenæum Advertisement.

NOVELTIES IN LITERATURE AND ARTS.

Forthcoming.—The Route of Hannibal, from the Rhone to the Alps, by Henry Lawes Long, Esq.—Mr. Bernays's Familiar German Exercises are in the press, and will very shortly appear.

Just subscribed.—Pluralities Indefensible, by Richard Newton, D.D., 8vo. 3s.—Plain Sermons, by the Rector of Calverton, 1mo. 3s.—The People's Book, 8vo. 5s. 6d.—Family Dramatic Library, Vol. 4, 5s.—Sermons on the Amusements of the Stage, by the Rev. J. Best, 12mo. 5s. 6d.—Life of the Rev. E. Erskine, 12mo. 7s. 6d.—Four Years in the West Indies, by F. W. N. Bayley, 2d edit. 14. 4s.—Tate's Foreign Exchange, 8vo. 6s.—Yeo's Inquiry after Prophecy Truth, 8vo. 7s. 6d.—The Life of Sir Thomas Lawrence, 2 vols. 8vo. 14. 12s.—Murray on the Diamond, 12mo. 5s.—Fitz Raymond, or the Rambler on the Rhine, 8vo. 7s. 6d.—Sermons by the late Sir H. Moncrieff, 8vo. 10s. 6d.—Wright on Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope, 4s.—Hurwitz's Hebrew Grammar, 8vo. 17s.—Hurwitz's Hebrew Etymology and Syntax, 8vo. 12s.—Panorama of Constantinople and its Environs, plain 14.; coloured 17. 14s.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

D. J. N. We were glad to see his handwriting. His hints are always attended to. We often cannot comply with his wishes, any more than we can gratify our own; but time and circumstances work with us, and we strive to avail ourselves of them.

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